



INSPECTOR GENERAL
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
400 ARMY NAVY DRIVE
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22202-4704

MAR 30 2004

The Honorable Duncan Hunter
Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-6035

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The enclosed report satisfies the requirement of section 1566, title 10, United States Code, which requires the Inspector General of the Department of Defense to annually assess the DoD voting assistance program and report the results of the assessment to Congress no later than March 31.

As explained in the enclosed report, the Federal Voting Assistance Program Office continued to provide a variety of valuable resources and assistance to uniformed absentee voters. However, opportunities exist to improve the DoD voting assistance program.

Please contact me or Mr. John R. Crane, Director, Office of Communications and Congressional Liaison, at (703) 604-8324, if you have any questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Joseph E. Schmitz

Enclosure:
As stated

cc: The Honorable Ike Skeleton
Ranking Minority Member

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON

04 MAR 31 PM 3:32

RECEIVED

Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Defense

Report No. D-2004-065

March 31, 2004

(Project No. D2003LF-0188)

DoD Implementation of the Voting Assistance Program

Executive Summary

Who Should Read This Report and Why? This report should be read by DoD civilian and military personnel who are responsible for the administration, oversight, and implementation of the Federal Voting Assistance Program and the Services' voting assistance programs.

Background. Section 1566, chapter 80 of title 10, United States Code, requires the Inspector General of the Department of Defense to annually assess each Service's compliance with the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (the Act), DoD regulations, the Federal Voting Assistance Program, and other requirements of law regarding voting by members of the Armed Forces. Additionally, section 1566 requires the Inspectors General of each Service to conduct annual reviews of the effectiveness and compliance of voting assistance programs. Our prior reports have discussed the implementation and effectiveness of the Services' voting assistance programs in years of regularly scheduled elections for Federal offices (2000 and 2002). This is our first report on the effectiveness of DoD's voting assistance program during a year when elections for Federal offices were not regularly scheduled.

The Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness is responsible for the policy and oversight functions of the DoD voting assistance program. The goals of the Federal Voting Assistance Program are to inform and educate absentee voters of their right to vote, to foster voting participation, and to protect the integrity of the voting process. As of September 2003, there were about 266,000 active duty personnel permanently stationed overseas and about 117,000 dependents (age 18 and over) who were covered by the Act. There were also about 1.1 million active duty personnel and 656,000 dependents (age 18 and over) in the continental United States (CONUS) and its territories who were potential absentee voters. Because of deployments, many of the CONUS-based military active duty personnel may be overseas when they need voting assistance. DoD faces the same challenges as the entire United States in its attempt to increase voting participation, particularly among the younger population of eligible voters. DoD challenges are magnified because of the worldwide dispersion of active duty personnel.

Results. The Federal Voting Assistance Program Office continued to provide a variety of valuable resources and assistance to voting assistance officers and uniformed absentee voters in 2003. However, opportunities exist to improve the DoD voting assistance program, as evidenced by the 3 partially effective and 7 ineffective programs at the 10 installations we visited. Additionally, 58 percent of the respondents who completed our questionnaire did not know who their unit voting assistance officer was. The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness needs to expedite revisions to DoD

Directive 1000.4, "Federal Voting Assistance Program," June 3, 2002, and the issuance of the 2004-2005 DoD Voting Plan to ensure that revisions and enhancements to the DoD voting assistance program will benefit uniformed absentee voters during the 2004 Federal elections. Although the Air Force voting assistance program was not fully compliant with DoD guidance, it generally continued to maintain a program that was more effective than the other Services. The Navy and the Marine Corps had implemented or planned improvements to their voting assistance programs. However, several problems identified in our reports after the 2000 and 2002 elections continued to exist in 2003 for all the Services. The Services must provide command emphasis at all levels of command and need to improve oversight of program implementation in order to ensure:

- that voting assistance programs are consistently effective, to include voter awareness and understanding of the absentee ballot process; and
- that unit voting assistance officers are appointed and properly trained in a timely manner to assist uniformed absentee voters.

Updating Service voting assistance program guidance, establishing full-time Service Voting Action Officers, and developing a reporting system on compliance of voting assistance programs are steps that will help to ensure that DoD has an effective voting assistance program. Additionally, the Services should ensure that junior enlisted personnel and first-time voters are aware of absentee voting procedures and that the Service Inspectors General provide voting assistance program inspection results to their Service Voting Action Officer on a continuing basis.

Frequent deployments, increased operational requirements, and worldwide commitments are compelling reasons for DoD to improve the effectiveness of its program. As stated in our last report, it is imperative that uniformed absentee voters be given the knowledge and tools necessary to exercise their constitutional right to vote, if they choose to do so. See the Finding section of the report for the detailed recommendations.

Management Comments and Evaluation Response. The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness and the Navy did not provide comments on the draft report. We request that the Under Secretary and the Navy provide comments by May 31, 2004.

Although the Army did not specifically concur or nonconcur with individual recommendations, it provided examples of how the Army has been responsive in efforts to improve the voting assistance program. Additionally, U.S. Army, Europe, and Seventh Army provided details of its 2004 voting campaign to ensure that all military personnel, DoD civilians, and their dependents are provided information on voting registration and participation. The campaign and supplemental voting action plan provide extensive guidance for implementing the program. The package demonstrates senior military support for strengthening the Army voting assistance program in Europe.

The Army comments are partially responsive. The Army needs to provide additional details on its 2004-2005 voting assistance program implementing instructions, its plans to monitor voting assistance program compliance, and its plans to ensure junior enlisted personnel and other first-time voters are provided voting assistance information. We also request that the Army reconsider its position and provide additional details on:

- the timely reissuance of its 1981 voting regulation,
- the establishment of the Service Voting Action Officer as a full-time position, and

- the dissemination of voting inspection results to the Service Voting Action Officer on a continuing basis.

The Air Force concurred with all recommendations except the recommendation to establish the Service Voting Action Officer as a full-time position. The Air Force stated that the voting assistance program is run by two military personnel, but it will consider shifting the Service Voting Action Officer responsibilities to a civilian employee as additional duties.

The Air Force comments are partially responsive and additional comments are required. The Air Force needs to provide additional details on how it plans to monitor voting assistance program compliance, the rationale for its decision concerning civilianizing its Service Voting Action Officer position, and how it plans to emphasize the Air Force voting assistance program at all levels of command. We also request that the Air Force reconsider its position and provide additional details on establishing the Service Voting Action Officer as a full-time position.

The Marine Corps concurred with all recommendations except the recommendation to have the Commandant of the Marine Corps issue memorandums reemphasizing the program. However, the Marine Corps referred to specific senior-level messages sent to all Marines in late 2003 and discussed plans for a June 2004 message from the Commandant of the Marine Corps.

The Marine Corps comments are generally responsive, but additional comments are required on its plans to monitor voting assistance program compliance and how it will ensure voter assistance training is provided to all junior enlisted and other first-time voters.

We request that management provide comments on the final report recommendations by May 31, 2004, as indicated in Table 5 (page 31). See the Finding section for a discussion of management comments (page 23) and the Management Comments section of the report for the complete text of management comments.

Service Inspectors General Reports. The Army Inspector General reported that major commands were complying with instructions to conduct an annual assessment of the Army voting assistance program and stated that 67 percent of the major commands assessed were in compliance with instructions provided (Appendix E). The Naval Inspector General reported that the Navy voting assistance program for calendar year 2003 was found lacking (Appendix F). The Air Force Inspector General reported that the overall assessment of the Air Force's compliance with DoD Directive 1000.4, related Air Force instructions, and the Act is satisfactory (Appendix G). The Marine Corps Inspector General reported that the Marine Corps has an effective voting assistance program and, with the exception of reported discrepancies, complies with DoD Directive 1000.4 and the Act (Appendix H).



INSPECTOR GENERAL
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
400 ARMY NAVY DRIVE
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22202-4704

March 31, 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL
AND READINESS
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE
(FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND COMPTROLLER)
NAVAL INSPECTOR GENERAL
AUDITOR GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

SUBJECT: Report on DoD Implementation of the Voting Assistance Program
(Report No. D-2004-065)

We are providing this report for review and comment. The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness and the Navy did not respond to the draft report. The Army, the Air Force, and the Marine Corps responded to the draft report. We considered their comments when preparing the final report.

DoD Directive 7650.3 requires that all recommendations be resolved promptly. We request that the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness and the Navy provide comments on the final report by May 31, 2004. We also request that the Army, the Air Force, and the Marine Corps provide additional comments as indicated in Table 5 (page 31) of this report by May 31, 2004.

If possible, please send management comments in electronic format (Adobe Acrobat file only) to Audnorfolk@dodig.osd.mil. Copies of the management comments must contain the actual signature of the authorizing official. We cannot accept the / Signed / symbol in place of the actual signature. If you arrange to send classified comments electronically, they must be sent over the SECRET Internet Protocol Router Network (SIPRNET).

We appreciate the courtesies extended to the staff. Questions should be directed to Mr. Michael A. Joseph or Mr. Timothy J. Tonkovic at (757) 872-4801. See Appendix I for the report distribution. The team members are listed inside the back cover.

By direction of the Deputy Inspector General for Auditing:

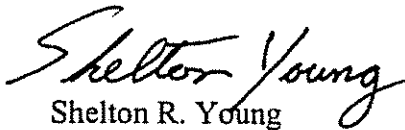

Shelton R. Young
Director, Readiness and
Logistics Support Directorate

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	i
Commendable Actions	1
Background	1
Objectives	4
Limitations on Use of Report Data	5
Finding	
Implementation of the DoD Voting Assistance Program	6
Appendixes	
A. Scope and Methodology	32
Management Control Program Review	34
Prior Coverage	35
B. Uniformed Absentee Voter Questionnaire	37
C. Commands and Installations Visited	40
D. Voting Assistance Program Best Practices	41
E. Department of the Army Inspector General Report	43
F. Department of the Navy Inspector General Report	46
G. Department of the Air Force Inspector General Report	49
H. Marine Corps Inspector General Report	55
I. Report Distribution	59
Management Comments	
Department of the Army	61
U.S. Army, Europe, and Seventh Army	64
Department of the Air Force	71
Marine Corps	73

Commendable Actions

The Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Defense (OIG DoD) evaluation team conducted unannounced visits at 10 locations to assess the effectiveness and compliance of voting assistance programs during 2003. The unannounced nature of the visits presented administrative challenges to accomplish the evaluation; however, we generally received excellent cooperation and support for our effort. For example, at Royal Air Force Lakenheath, the OIG DoD team arrived on the same day as 160 inspectors from U.S. Air Forces in Europe. The commander of the 48th Fighter Wing and his staff recognized the importance of the voting assistance program and readily accommodated our request for access to installation personnel, even though those personnel were involved in other inspections. We appreciate the support provided by the Services and installation personnel.

Background

This evaluation was required by Section 1566, chapter 80 of title 10, United States Code (10 U.S.C. 1566), which states:

(c) ANNUAL EFFECTIVENESS AND COMPLIANCE REVIEWS.—(1) The Inspector General of each of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps shall conduct—

(A) an annual review of the effectiveness of voting assistance programs; and

(B) an annual review of the compliance with voting assistance programs of that armed force.

(2) Upon the completion of each annual review under paragraph (1), each Inspector General specified in that paragraph shall submit to the Inspector General of the Department of Defense a report on the results of each such review. Such report shall be submitted in time each year to be reflected in the report of the Inspector General of the Department of Defense under paragraph (3).

(3) Not later than March 31 each year, the Inspector General of the Department of Defense shall submit to Congress a report on—

(A) the effectiveness during the preceding calendar year of voting assistance programs; and

(B) the level of compliance during the preceding calendar year with voting assistance programs of each of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps.

INSPECTOR GENERAL ASSESSMENTS.—(1) The Inspector General of the Department of Defense shall periodically conduct at

Department of Defense installations unannounced assessments of the compliance at those installations with—

- (A) the requirements of the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (42 U.S.C. 1973ff et seq.);
- (B) Department of Defense regulations regarding that Act and the Federal Voting Assistance Program carried out under that Act; and,
- (C) other requirements of law regarding voting by members of the armed forces.

(2) The Inspector General shall conduct an assessment under paragraph (1) at not less than 10 Department of Defense installations each calendar year.

Federal Voting Assistance Program. The Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (the Act) establishes Federal, State, and territory requirements to allow certain groups of citizens to register and vote absentee in elections for Federal offices. The Act states that the President shall designate the head of an Executive department to have primary responsibility for Federal functions of the Act. On June 8, 1988, the President issued Executive Order 12642, "Designation of the Secretary of Defense as the Presidential Designee." The Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) Office was assigned responsibility and authority to carry out the Act.

The goals of the FVAP are to inform and educate absentee voters of their right to vote, to foster voting participation, and to protect the integrity of the voting process. The FVAP Office has many responsibilities, such as establishing and maintaining liaison with officials of the State legislatures and with State and local government officials and working with those officials to implement the Act. The FVAP Office also prescribes an official post card form to be used by absentee voters for registering to vote; distributes material on State absentee voting procedures; and, after Presidential elections, reports on the effectiveness of the voting assistance effort. States and territories have enacted laws allowing citizens to register and vote absentee in State and local elections. In December 2003, the FVAP Office was transferred from the Director of Administration and Management to the Defense Human Resources Activity.

Absentee voters are those individuals absent from their place of legal residence where they are otherwise qualified to vote. U.S. citizens covered by the Act are "absent uniformed services voters" and "overseas voters." This report includes coverage of DoD absent uniformed Services voters. We use the term "uniformed absentee voters" to include any member of the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, or the Marine Corps on active duty who, by reason of such active duty, is absent from the place of legal residence where the member is otherwise qualified to vote. We have also included in that term the spouse or dependents of those active duty members who, by reason of the active duty of the member, are absent from the place of legal residence where they are otherwise qualified to vote. The evaluation did not cover other uniformed Service members, such as merchant marines, who are also covered by the Act.

As of September 2003, there were about 266,000 active duty personnel permanently stationed overseas and about 117,000 dependents (age 18 and over) who were covered by the Act. There were also about 1.1 million active duty personnel and about 656,000 dependents (age 18 and over) in the continental United States (CONUS) and its territories who were potential uniformed absentee voters. Because of deployments, many of the CONUS-based military active duty personnel may be overseas when they need voting assistance.

DoD and Service Policies and Procedures

The Act allows uniformed absentee voters and overseas voters to register and vote by absentee ballot for Federal offices. DoD policy states that unless military necessity precludes it, uniformed absentee voters shall have an opportunity to register and vote in any general election for which they are eligible. The DoD policy applies to all elections for Federal, State, and local office.

DoD Guidance. DoD Directive 1000.4, "Federal Voting Assistance Program," June 3, 2002, assigns the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD[P&R]) policy and oversight functions of the FVAP. DoD Directive 1000.4 applies to the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Services (including the Coast Guard by agreement with the Department of Homeland Security [formerly under the Department of Transportation]), the Joint Staff, the combatant commands, the OIG DoD, the Defense agencies, DoD field activities, and all other organizational entities within the Department of Defense. DoD Directive 1000.4 also applies to the commissioned corps of the Public Health Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

In addition to DoD Directive 1000.4, Deputy Secretary of Defense memorandum, "Federal Voting Assistance Program—2002-2003," March 26, 2002, announced the "DoD Voting Plan for 2002-2003" (DoD Voting Plan). Requirements of DoD Directive 1000.4 include command support at all levels for the FVAP, the designation of voting assistance officers (VAOs) at all levels of command, and in-hand delivery of the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) each calendar year. The DoD Directive also requires the Inspectors General of the Services to annually include the command voting assistance program as an item for specific review at every organizational level. The DoD Voting Plan addressed implementation of the Act and dissemination of information, guidance, and tasks related to the voting assistance program. The DoD Voting Plan further required the Services to develop comprehensive command-wide voting awareness and assistance programs and voting action plans for the 2002-2003 elections.

Army Guidance. Army Regulation 608-20, "Voting by Personnel of the Armed Forces," August 15, 1981, establishes policy, responsibilities, and procedures for Army implementation of the FVAP. The Regulation provides basic voting information needed by Armed Forces personnel, civilians officially attached with the Armed Forces overseas, and their dependents. For 2002-2003, the Army issued implementing instructions that discussed absentee voting procedures and responsibilities for the Army. The Army Adjutant General memorandum, "Instructions for Conducting the 2000-2002 Army Voting Assistance Program," June 13, 2002, includes instructions for implementing the Army voting assistance

program and for maximizing opportunities to encourage every eligible voter to register and vote. The instructions establish and assign specific responsibilities to the Adjutant General, commanders of major Army commands, installation commanders, and unit commanders down to company and detachment levels. The Army Adjutant General memorandum and implementing instructions were the 2002-2003 Army voting action plan required by the DoD Voting Plan.

Navy Guidance. Office of the Chief of Naval Operations Instruction 1742.1, "Navy Voting Assistance Program," August 14, 2002, establishes policy and assigns responsibilities. The Instruction states that the Navy voting assistance program shall be administered to ensure that eligible voters receive information about registration procedures and voter materials pertaining to scheduled elections. The Navy Instruction assigns voting assistance responsibilities to every level of command. In addition to the Instruction, Bureau of Naval Personnel Notice 1742, "CY-2002 Navy Voting Assistance Program," March 25, 2002, announced the Navy voting assistance plan. The goals of the plan were to provide eligible voters with information on the Navy voting assistance program and to achieve 100 percent registration of eligible Navy voters. The Navy did not issue a voting assistance plan for 2003.

Air Force Guidance. Air Force Instruction 36-3107, "Voting Assistance Program," September 10, 2003, implements the Act and informs personnel about voting opportunities, including absentee voting. The Air Force Instruction establishes specific voting assistance responsibilities at various levels of command, from the major command down to the unit voting counselor. In addition to Instruction 36-3107, the "Air Force Voting Plan 2002-03," undated, was issued with a goal of providing assistance for all elections, emphasizing the period before the November 5, 2002, general election. The plan reiterated specific responsibilities for Air Force headquarters, commanders of major commands and installations, installation personnel directors, and VAOs at each level of command.

Marine Corps Guidance. Marine Corps Order 1742.1A (Change 1), "Voter Registration Program," October 1, 2003, provides guidance and assigns responsibility for the implementation of the Marines Corps voter registration program to commanding officers at all echelons to assist Marines, their family members, and certain others in exercising their right to vote. Additionally, "United States Marine Corps Voting Action Plan 2002-2003," undated, implemented the Federal functions of the Act, disseminated information and guidance, and discussed tasks related to the voting assistance program. The plan independently set forth guidance and does not reference Marine Corps Order 1742.1A.

Objectives

The primary objective of our evaluation was to assess the effectiveness of the DoD voting assistance program and compliance with the Act. Specifically, we evaluated FVAP Office compliance with the Act and other requirements of law regarding voting by members of the Armed Forces. We also evaluated the

Services' compliance with DoD guidance for implementing the Act. In addition, we reviewed the adequacy of management controls as they applied to the overall evaluation objective. Our prior reports have discussed the implementation and effectiveness of the Services' absentee voting assistance programs in years of regularly scheduled elections for Federal offices (2000 and 2002). This is our first report on the effectiveness of DoD's voting assistance program during a year when elections for Federal offices were not regularly scheduled. See Appendix A for a discussion of the scope and methodology, the review of the management control program, and prior coverage.

Limitations on Use of Report Data

At the locations visited, we administered questionnaires and held discussion groups with active duty and dependent personnel to determine their level of awareness and understanding of the absentee voting process. The locations we visited and the individual participants were not randomly selected; therefore, results cannot be statistically projected to the universe. The questionnaire results are descriptive and are not intended to be used for comparative purposes. Although the uniformed absentee voter questionnaires used in this report are generally similar to the questionnaires used in our two previous evaluations, the numerical results from the questionnaires in those evaluations should not be compared with the results in this report. The questionnaire and discussion group responses reflect the perceptions of uniformed absentee voters concerning the absentee ballot process. The accuracy of those perceptions cannot be validated.

Implementation of the DoD Voting Assistance Program

The FVAP Office continued to provide a variety of valuable resources and assistance to unit voting assistance officers (UVAOs) and uniformed absentee voters in 2003. However, opportunities exist to improve the DoD voting assistance program, as evidenced by the 3 partially effective and 7 ineffective programs at the 10 installations we visited. Additionally, 58 percent of the respondents who completed our questionnaire did not know who their UVAO was. The USD(P&R) needs to expedite revisions to DoD Directive 1000.4, "Federal Voting Assistance Program," June 3, 2002, and the issuance of the 2004-2005 DoD Voting Plan. Timely issuance will ensure that revisions and enhancements to the DoD voting assistance program will benefit uniformed absentee voters during the 2004 Federal elections. Although the Air Force program was not fully compliant with DoD guidance, it generally continued to maintain a program that was more effective than the other Services. The Navy and the Marine Corps had implemented or planned improvements to their voting assistance programs. However, several problems identified in our reports after the 2000 and 2002 elections continued to exist in 2003 for all the Services. The Services must provide command emphasis at all levels of command and need to improve oversight of program implementation in order to ensure:

- that voting assistance programs are consistently effective, to include voter awareness and understanding of the absentee ballot process; and
- that UVAOs are appointed and properly trained in a timely manner to assist uniformed absentee voters.

Frequent deployments, increased operational requirements, and worldwide commitments are compelling reasons for DoD to improve the effectiveness of its program. As stated in our last report, it is imperative that uniformed absentee voters be given the knowledge and tools necessary to exercise their constitutional right to vote, if they choose to do so.

Assessment of the Service Voting Assistance Programs

To assess the effectiveness of the DoD voting assistance program during 2003, representatives from the OIG DoD developed and administered questionnaires to active duty and dependent personnel that focused on an individual's awareness and perceptions of the absentee voting process, the resources used to support the absentee voting process, the effectiveness of UVAOs, and the adequacy of FVAP Office voting assistance materials. The questionnaires were generally similar to those used in our evaluations of the 2000 and 2002 elections. The questionnaire for active duty and dependent personnel is in Appendix B.

We administered questionnaires to 1,125 uniformed absentee voters (including dependents) at 10 locations (see Appendix C). After completion of the questionnaire, the respondents participated in group discussions and were asked questions related to their experiences with absentee voting. We also interviewed the Service Voting Action Officer (SVAO) for each of the Services; installation voting assistance officers (IVAOs) and UVAOs at the installations visited; and personnel responsible for the voting assistance programs at the Service academies.

FVAP Office Voting Assistance Resources

Absentee Voting. The absentee voting process can be inherently difficult compared with voting in person. For uniformed absentee voters, absentee voting requires registering, requesting a ballot, and receiving a mailed ballot—a process that can be complex when compared with voting in the jurisdiction where one is registered. The absentee voting process must be accomplished in a timely manner to ensure that ballots are received prior to State deadlines. To assist uniformed absentee voters, the FVAP Office provides valuable information and assistance to uniformed absentee voters, including overseas active duty personnel, DoD civilians, and their dependents.

Federal Voting Assistance Program Office. The FVAP Office developed and provided valuable resources and assistance to absentee voters in 2003. The FVAP Office provides services and voting materials to:

- Armed Forces Recruitment Offices nationwide,
- military VAOs worldwide,
- embassy and consulate VAOs, and
- State and local government officials.

Two important resources provided by the FVAP Office are the *Voting Assistance Guide* (the *Guide*) and various newsletters.

Voting Assistance Guide. The *Guide* is the primary source of State-by-State information for uniformed absentee voters requesting registration and an absentee ballot from their jurisdiction of legal voting residence. In addition, the *Guide* contains valuable information for VAOs to help them carry out their duties.

Newsletters. *Voting Information News* is a monthly newsletter that contains timely information on upcoming elections, a “to do” list for VAOs, and other essential material to help ensure continuity of election information and the enfranchisement of uniformed absentee voters. In addition, news releases are generally sent by the FVAP Office days in advance of election dates and contain critical procedural information on upcoming elections, including registration and ballot deadlines for elections for Federal office and some State elections. The *Voting Information News* is distributed by e-mail and regular mail and is available

on the FVAP Web site (<http://www.fvap.gov>). News releases are distributed by e-mail.

Other Resources. The FVAP Office provides voting assistance and information to uniformed absentee voters through its Web site, an information center, and a toll-free telephone service. The FVAP Web site includes downloadable training presentations and links to State Boards of Election, Service voting Web sites, and other sites that are intended to assist absentee voters and facilitate the duties of VAOs worldwide. Additional FVAP Office activities include the production of print and broadcast voter education information and the training of VAOs.

The FVAP FY 2003 budget was \$17.4 million, which included \$2.8 million for contracting, services, and salaries and \$14.6 million for the Secure Electronic Registration and Voting Experiment (SERVE) demonstration project.

The voting demonstration project was intended to allow uniformed absentee voters to register and to vote electronically via the Internet from anywhere in the world. DoD will not use the voting demonstration project for actual registration and voting during the 2004 elections, but will continue testing, certification, and evaluation activities to assess the feasibility of the use of the Internet for absentee registration and voting.

We recognize that uniformed absentee voters who completed our questionnaire generally participate in Federal elections at a higher rate than the voting rates for the total U.S. voting population, including absentee and in-person voters. However, we believe that opportunities still exist to improve the DoD voting assistance program. Table 1 shows 2000 and 2002 voting participation rates for the respondents who completed our questionnaire and the U.S. voting population.

Table 1. Federal Election Participation Rates		
	<u>2000</u>	<u>2002</u>
Uniformed Absentee Voters ¹	55 percent ²	46 percent ²
U.S. Voting Population	51 percent	37 percent

¹ Respondents who completed our questionnaire.
² Includes questionnaire respondents who voted in person.

We also recognize that Service voting assistance programs are emphasized in years with regularly scheduled Federal elections. However, it is DoD policy to encourage eligible voters to participate in elections for Federal, State, and local office. In support of this policy, it is critical for the Services to maintain a continuous, viable voting assistance program.

Opportunities Exist to Improve the DoD Voting Assistance Program

Opportunities exist to improve the DoD voting assistance program, as evidenced by the 3 partially effective and 7 ineffective programs at the 10 installations we visited. Additionally, 58 percent of the respondents who completed our questionnaire did not know who their UVAO was.

Expedited issuance and dissemination of DoD's voting assistance program guidance is an improvement that is urgently needed. In addition, problems with the Service voting assistance programs that we identified after the 2000 and 2002 elections continued to exist in 2003 and improvements are still needed. For example, more than half of the respondents who completed our questionnaire were not aware of FVAP resources and 26 percent were not aware that their Service had a voting assistance program. Although not fully compliant with DoD guidance, the Air Force generally continued to maintain a program that was more effective than the other Services. The Navy and the Marine Corps had implemented or planned improvements for their voting assistance programs. However, all four Services need to provide more emphasis at all levels of command and improve oversight of voting assistance programs. The Services also need to ensure consistent and effective program implementation and the availability of assistance for uniformed absentee voters.

Absentee Voting Guidance. DoD Directive 1000.4, June 3, 2002, updated the September 6, 1996, directive concerning policy and responsibilities for the FVAP. In response to our report on the 2002 elections, the Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness stated that further guidance would be provided requiring that Service voting assistance regulations, instructions, or orders be consistent with the current DoD Directive 1000.4.

On May 2, 2003, the Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness issued a memorandum, "Service Voting Assistance Regulations, Instructions, and Orders," to the Secretaries of the Military Departments. The memorandum required review and revision of Service directives to correct discrepancies discussed in our report on the 2002 elections and required the inclusion of requirements established by the *Help America Vote Act of 2002*. The *Help America Vote Act*, Public Law 107-252, was signed by the President on October 29, 2002. The Principal Deputy Under Secretary also required that the Service revisions include guidance on:

- ensuring command support at all levels of command;
- publicizing the location and identity of UVAOs within each command;
- maintaining a directory of major command VAOs and IVAOs;
- establishing a UVAO minimum and maximum span of control;

-
- ensuring thorough and timely distribution of voting materials, including the FPCA and Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB); and
 - conducting uniformed absentee voter training in even-numbered years.

The Principal Deputy Under Secretary required that revised Service guidance be issued by August 2003.

In June 2003, the FVAP Office proposed revisions to DoD Directive 1000.4 to incorporate provisions in the 2002 National Defense Authorization Act and the *Help America Vote Act*. The revision, planned for issuance in September 2003, also included proposed changes for the Services to establish an installation and major command VAO network, a communications capability for rapid dissemination of voting information, and a UVAO span of control. The proposed span of control is one UVAO in a unit with 25 or more permanently assigned Service members and an additional UVAO assigned for each additional 50 Service members. However, as of March 2, 2004, the revised DoD Directive had not been published.

DoD also issues a biennial DoD Voting Plan that implements the functions of the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act and the provisions of DoD Directive 1000.4. The objective of the DoD Voting Plan is to ensure that voters are provided all necessary voting information and procedures. As of March 2, 2004, the 2004-2005 DoD Voting Plan had not been issued. Continued delays in updating the DoD Voting Plan will hinder DoD's efforts to provide all necessary voting information, including voting age requirements, election dates, ballot proposals, and other absentee voting procedures. Continuing delays in issuing a new DoD Directive 1000.4 and the 2004-2005 DoD Voting Plan will contribute to inconsistencies in the implementation and effectiveness of the Services' voting assistance programs.

The Air Force and the Marine Corps issued guidance in 2003 that incorporates the changes required by the memorandum issued by the Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness and by the June 2002 DoD Directive 1000.4. Air Force Instruction 36-3107, September 10, 2003, expands the role of the Air Force in assisting personnel with voting matters and clarifies the roles and responsibilities of major commands, installation commanders, IVAOs, and UVAOs. Marine Corps Order 1742.1A (Change 1), October 1, 2003, provides additional guidance for implementing its voting assistance program, including completion of FPCAs upon check-in at each new duty station. Both Air Force and Marine Corps guidance comply with the current version of DoD Directive 1000.4, but they may need to be revised when DoD issues a new DoD Directive 1000.4.

Army Regulation 608-20, August 15, 1981, and Navy Instruction 1742.1, August 14, 2002, are not in compliance with the current DoD Directive 1000.4 or the May 2, 2003, guidance from the Principal Deputy Under Secretary. Areas of non-compliance in Army and the Navy guidance include UVAO spans of control, in-hand delivery dates of FPCAs, and the requirement to support tenant and geographically separated units. In response to our report on the 2002 elections,

the Army Adjutant General stated that Army guidance would be updated in future Army voting assistance program instructions and directives. However, updated regulatory guidance was never issued and the 1981 Army Regulation 608-20 continues to be the Army voting assistance program guidance. Navy Instruction 1742.1 was updated in 2002, but does not include the June 2002 DoD 1000.4 guidance or revisions required by the Principal Deputy Under Secretary's May 2, 2003, memorandum.

The proposed DoD Directive 1000.4 requires measures to ensure voting materials are moved expeditiously by military postal authorities; designates the number of uniformed absentee voters that can be served by a UVAO; requires that time and resources be provided to UVAOs to perform their duties; and requires the establishment of a VAO network and communications capability to quickly disseminate information through the installation or major command. We recognize that the delayed issuance of DoD Directive 1000.4 is one reason improvements are still needed in each Service's program. Because DoD Directive 1000.4 was not published in a timely manner, it was not realistic to expect the Services to revise and implement their guidance in time for the 2003 elections. However, the Army and the Navy should have updated their guidance based on the memorandum from the Principal Deputy Under Secretary and our report on the 2002 elections.

Incorporating DoD policy in Service regulations ensures the widest dissemination of DoD policies and procedures and emphasizes the importance that the highest levels of command place on exercising the right to vote. All of the Services may have to update their guidance again once the revised DoD Directive 1000.4 is issued.

Consistent and up-to-date regulations, instructions, and orders are important aspects of successful absentee voting assistance programs. Additional critical components of voting assistance programs are SVAO accountability and oversight of voting assistance programs.

Service Accountability and Oversight. DoD Directive 1000.4 requires that a uniformed officer of general or flag rank be designated by each Service as the Senior Service Voting Representative and be accountable for Service-wide implementation of voting assistance programs. Although a general or flag officer holds the title of Senior Service Voting Representative in each of the Services, the overall management of the voting assistance program is delegated to an SVAO, who is responsible for the Service's voting assistance operations. During the majority of 2003, the SVAO position was a collateral duty position for all of the Services. As of November 2003, the Navy and the Marine Corps recognized that their voting assistance programs required full-time attention and dedicated a full-time person to the position. The Army and the Air Force should also establish the SVAO as a full-time position, and the Navy, the Air Force, and the Marine Corps should consider establishing the SVAO as a civilian position to help ensure continuity of their programs.

During 2003, the Marine Corps SVAO and the Marine Corps Inspector General worked closely together on mandatory inspections of the voting assistance program. The SVAO was an active participant in the Marine Corps Inspector

General inspections. Results of the individual inspections were provided to commands, installations, and the units inspected, as well as to the SVAO. The SVAO also monitored the results of major command and unit-level inspections. We believe that providing inspection results to the Marine Corp SVAO was a valuable tool and assisted the SVAO in identifying areas needing improvement throughout the year. To assist the Services in monitoring their programs, the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force Inspectors General should provide their inspection results to their SVAO throughout the year.

We also found that the Army, the Air Force, and the Marine Corps SVAOs were able to identify their major command and installation VAOs for 2003. In mid-2003, the Navy recognized the need to improve its voting assistance program oversight and started developing a Web-based Voting Information Management System (VIMS). VIMS will provide a roster of VAOs by unit identifier code as well as a checklist for command, installation, and unit VAOs to complete as part of a post-election survey. The Navy should be commended for its initiative and development of an oversight mechanism; however, the Navy should establish a periodic update capability in VIMS for users to report on compliance with the Navy voting assistance program throughout an election year.

Improvements Are Still Needed. Despite initiatives implemented and planned, many of the problems that we found after the 2000 and 2002 elections continued to exist in 2003. The Services need to provide command emphasis at all levels of command and need to improve oversight of the program in order to ensure:

- that voting assistance programs are consistently effective, to include voter awareness and understanding of the absentee ballot process; and
- that UVAOs are appointed and properly trained in a timely manner to assist uniformed absentee voters.

Command Emphasis. We asked questionnaire respondents to rate the emphasis placed on voting at their installation. Although 45 percent of the respondents rated command emphasis as sufficient or too much, 55 percent rated the emphasis as not enough or none (insufficient). The perception that local command emphasis was insufficient was higher among junior enlisted respondents. For those respondents who answered the command emphasis question, 73 percent of Army, 61 percent of Navy, 36 percent of Air Force, and 52 percent of Marine Corps personnel stated that command emphasis was insufficient. Although the design of the questionnaire does not allow the establishment of cause and effect relationships, the voting rate was higher for respondents who thought that command emphasis was sufficient than for those who thought command emphasis was insufficient.

Service Oversight. Command emphasis and Service oversight are crucial components of an effective voting assistance program. Until the Services oversee and emphasize the importance of voting assistance programs, DoD will continue to have partially effective or ineffective programs.

During 2003, the SVAOs did not have appropriate controls in place to ensure that the Services' voting assistance programs were effectively implemented

at all levels of command. The SVAOs relied on major command IVAOs and UVAOs to comply with Service guidance and voting action plans for the success of their voting assistance programs. The SVAOs did not effectively monitor the degree of compliance with their voting assistance programs and generally had no followup mechanism to determine the effectiveness of program implementation.

The Services should develop a reporting system to track the implementation of the voting assistance program. The system should monitor an installation's compliance with DoD Directive 1000.4, Service guidance, and voting action plans. For example, IVAOs could notify SVAOs that their installation had completed distribution of FPCAs by the required date, could state that UVAOs were appointed and trained and that their span of control was appropriate, and could provide information on the numbers of personnel that have been trained. Additionally, monitoring the voting assistance program inspection results from the Service Inspectors General would provide SVAOs a "snapshot" status of the voting assistance program and could provide valuable information to the SVAO on corrective actions to be implemented at the major command, installation, or unit level throughout the voting year.

The need for improved emphasis and oversight is supported by the respondents' answers to questions on availability and awareness of voting resources and awareness of UVAOs. Without command emphasis, oversight, and accountability of the voting assistance programs, uniformed absentee voter awareness and understanding will continue to be dependent on individual efforts.

Awareness of Voting Assistance Program Resources. We asked uniformed absentee voters about voting information and communication tools that were available during 2003. The questionnaires were designed to gauge the level of awareness of, and satisfaction with, FVAP and Service resources. As stated previously, many respondents were not aware of the resources. However, those who had used the resources were satisfied with them. Table 2 shows the percent of uniformed absentee voters who completed our questionnaires that were unaware of FVAP and Service resources.

Table 2. Percent of Awareness of FVAP and Service Resources	
<u>Resource</u>	<u>Percent of Questionnaire Respondents Unaware</u>
<i>2002-03 Voting Assistance Guide</i>	54
FVAP Web site	58
Service or installation Web site	67

To its credit, the FVAP Office continued to offer useful tools, but many uniformed absentee voters continued to be unaware of them. For example, 67 percent of Army, 52 percent of Navy, 43 percent of Air Force, and 59 percent of Marine Corps personnel who completed our questionnaire stated that they were

unaware of the *Guide*. Additionally, 70 percent of Army, 58 percent of Navy, 44 percent of Air Force, and 64 percent of Marine Corps personnel who completed our questionnaire stated that they were unaware of the FVAP Web site. Low percentages of respondents who were aware of the FVAP and Service resources may be directly attributable to the low percentages who knew their UVAO. Better implementation of voting assistance programs and uniformed absentee voter representation by sufficient and trained UVAOs will help DoD to provide a more effective voting assistance program.

As we found after the 2000 and 2002 elections, many respondents were not aware of the resources, but those who had used the resources were satisfied with them. Table 3 shows the level of satisfaction for the respondents who rated satisfaction with FVAP and Service resources.

Table 3. Percent of Satisfaction With FVAP and Service Resources	
<u>Resource</u>	<u>Percent of Questionnaire Respondents Satisfied</u>
2002-03 Voting Assistance Guide	82
FVAP Web site	80
Service or installation Web site	75

Uniformed absentee voters face a multi-step process in order to comply with a myriad of State and local voting requirements. The challenges encountered by uniformed absentee voters include obtaining an awareness and understanding of absentee voting procedures, obtaining voting material in a timely manner, and registering for and obtaining an absentee ballot. The availability of FVAP Office resources and the resources of Service voting assistance programs is crucial for uniformed absentee voters because of the complexity of the absentee voting process.

Service Voting Assistance Programs. The FVAP and Service voting assistance programs provide uniformed absentee voters procedures and resources for accomplishing the absentee voting process. However, the effectiveness of the Services' voting assistance programs varied considerably at the 10 locations we visited. Many of the problems we found after the 2000 and 2002 elections continued to exist at the installations visited in 2003, indicating that improvements are still needed in each Service's program.

DoD faces many of the same challenges as the entire United States in its attempt to increase voting participation, particularly among the younger population of eligible voters. DoD challenges are magnified because of frequent deployments, increased operational requirements, and worldwide dispersion of its absentee voters. The Services could improve awareness and understanding of the absentee ballot process, which might encourage non-voters to participate in future elections. We attribute the lack of awareness and understanding of the absentee

ballot process to a lack of consistency and continuity in the implementation of Service voting assistance programs.

Understanding of the Absentee Ballot Process. Voter understanding is critical to successful use of absentee ballots. Questionnaire results showed that 58 percent of the uniformed absentee voters surveyed understood the absentee ballot process from a moderate extent to completely. The level of understanding was substantially lower (37 percent) for junior enlisted personnel than for officers (76 percent). Additionally, the understanding level (moderate to completely) for respondents who had previously voted using an absentee ballot was substantially higher (81 percent) than for those who had not (39 percent). The issue of uniformed absentee voters not understanding the absentee voting process was also discussed in our prior reports on the 2000 and 2002 elections (see Appendix A for a listing of those reports). During 2003, about 42 percent of the questionnaire respondents stated that they understood the absentee voting process to a small extent or not at all.

Problems Encountered During 2003. As we did in 2002, we asked uniformed absentee voters about problems they encountered during 2003 and any reasons they might have had for not voting. About 65 percent of uniformed absentee voters who completed our questionnaire stated that they had at least one problem with the absentee voting process during 2003. The problems mentioned most often, in descending order, were:

- did not understand the absentee voting process,
- not enough information on candidates or issues,
- difficulty in maintaining a current mailing address with local election officials,
- no way of knowing whether State election officials had received registration forms,
- complicated voting procedures, and
- the absentee ballot never arrived.

Reasons for Not Voting. Of the uniformed absentee voters who completed our questionnaire, 54 percent stated that they did not vote or did not intend to vote in a local, State, or special Federal election in 2003. Their reasons for not voting, in descending order, were:

- not familiar with the candidates or issues,
- not interested in voting,
- did not know whether there were elections in their voting jurisdictions,

-
- had no candidate preference, and
 - did not know how to obtain an absentee ballot.

Four of the five reasons mentioned above were also among the five most frequent reasons cited for not voting after the November 2002 elections.

Some of the other reasons for not voting were related to State absentee voting procedures, and some included personal preference issues. Neither State absentee voting procedures nor personal decisions about voting are controllable by DoD. Although DoD can encourage voter participation, it cannot and should not attempt to force its Service members to vote.

Although improvements are needed in DoD's voting assistance program, we found examples of installation personnel implementing programs to increase uniformed absentee voter awareness and understanding. At Luke Air Force Base, personnel were augmenting a program used to train junior enlisted personnel. The First Term Airman Center training program provides comprehensive information on duties and responsibilities for individuals arriving at their first duty location. Included in the various command presentations is a segment on the voting assistance program, presented by the IVAO or an experienced UVAO. We believe that the First Term Airman Center training program, commander's call, and other weekly or monthly training and information sessions are excellent opportunities for IVAOs and UVAOs to present information on absentee voting. The Services should consider using various training materials and military settings, such as command orientations or general military training sessions, to maximize voter awareness and the effectiveness of voting assistance programs.

Effectiveness of Voting Assistance Programs. The effectiveness of the Services' voting assistance programs varied during 2003 at the locations we visited. At 10 installations, we found that two Air Force and one Navy installations had partially effective programs and three Army, two Navy, one Air Force, and one Marine Corps installations had ineffective programs. Command emphasis and SVAO oversight of those Service programs would have helped ensure that regulations were followed and corrective actions taken as necessary.

To determine an installation's effectiveness, we assessed each installation's program compliance with DoD and Service guidance and how well the program had been implemented. We also considered comments from uniformed absentee voter discussion groups in our assessments. Voting assistance programs were ineffective for some of the following reasons.

- IVAOs were not appointed or trained.
- UVAOs were not appointed or trained.
- In-hand delivery of FPCAs did not occur.

-
- IVAOs and UVAOs were not aware of DoD or Service guidance.
 - There was no evidence of command involvement that emphasized the voting assistance program.

Availability of Voting Assistance Officers. Providing accessible and knowledgeable VAOs should improve understanding of absentee voting procedures for uniformed absentee voters. In our opinion, Naval Air Station Keflavik, Royal Air Force Lakenheath, and Luke Air Force Base demonstrated comprehensive continuity of operations. For example, at Naval Air Station Keflavik and Luke Air Force Base, commanders appointed new IVAOs who worked closely with their predecessors to ensure continuity of the program and a smooth transition of IVAO responsibilities. At Royal Air Force Lakenheath, the IVAO continually monitored the appointment and training of UVAOs to ensure continuity of the voting assistance program. For details of other voting assistance program best practices and initiatives at the installation and SVAO level, see Appendix D.

During our evaluation of the Services' voting assistance programs, we conducted discussion groups with UVAOs. At seven locations—three Army, two Navy, one Air Force, and one Marine Corps—trained UVAOs were not readily available to ensure that all uniformed absentee voters had the opportunity to vote. UVAOs were not designated and appointed and were not properly trained to satisfactorily perform the required duties of a UVAO. Also, we were unable to locate current UVAO lists, appointment letters, or other documentation to indicate that UVAOs had been assigned to assist voters before our arrival.

At one of the two Navy installations, we found that an IVAO had not been designated and appointed until our unannounced arrival. As a result, the installation had no focal point to coordinate voting assistance and ensure voting opportunities for uniformed absentee voters at all installation organizations.

At the seven locations, some UVAOs had been appointed after our unannounced arrival. It appeared that they had been appointed merely to satisfy our review requirements. To ensure consistent application of voting assistance programs and to assist uniformed absentee voters, the Services need to appoint and properly train IVAOs and UVAOs in a timely manner. The Services need controls to ensure that such appointments and training are accomplished.

The fact that VAOs were not designated at all levels of command demonstrates the lack of emphasis and low priority given the program at the seven installations. For example, during our review of the Army voting assistance program in Germany, we found that command VAOs were designated at the Army's major command and at area support groups that function as Army installations within Europe. However, VAOs were not designated at subordinate commands, such as V Corps and the 1st Infantry Division. DoD Directive 1000.4 and the DoD Voting Plan require that VAOs be designated at all levels of command. At the two Army locations in Germany, the voting assistance program was regarded as another administrative burden rather than a command-emphasis program. Further, several UVAOs commented that they had more important

things to do than hand out FPCAs and that eligible voters needed to be more responsible in learning how to vote. Appointing UVAOs is important, but just as important is the assurance that uniformed absentee voters are aware of their UVAOs.

Respondents' Awareness of UVAOs. Uniformed absentee voters' awareness of their UVAOs and respondent perceptions of UVAO effectiveness varied. Overall, 58 percent of the uniformed absentee voters who answered our questionnaire stated that they did not know who their UVAO was. Awareness of the UVAO was lower among junior enlisted personnel (about 23 percent). Table 4 shows that the Army and the Navy had the highest percentage of respondents who were unaware of who their UVAO was. For the locations visited, only the Air Force achieved more than half of its respondents knowing who their UVAO was (63 percent). Even the Air Force's level of awareness demonstrates the opportunity for improvement.

Table 4. Awareness of UVAO	
<u>Service</u>	<u>Percent of Questionnaire Respondents Unaware</u>
Army	75
Navy	65
Air Force	37
Marine Corps	58

For the respondents who knew their UVAO and used the services of the UVAO, about 91 percent were satisfied with the availability of their UVAO. About 87 percent were satisfied with the UVAO's knowledge of the absentee ballot process, and about 91 percent were satisfied with the UVAOs performance in providing voting materials upon request.

The high percentage of individuals who did not know their UVAO is one indicator that there was a low level of compliance with DoD and Service regulations and that voting assistance programs need improvement. Those respondents who knew their UVAO and used their UVAO's services reported a high level of satisfaction with their voting assistance and greater understanding of the absentee ballot process. Without appointed and properly trained UVAOs, uniformed absentee voters may not have access to, or be aware of, voting assistance resources such as the FPCA or the FWAB.

In-Hand FPCA Delivery. Many uniformed absentee voters did not receive in-hand delivery of the FPCA. DoD Directive 1000.4 requires the heads of DoD Components to ensure in-hand delivery of FPCAs by:

- January 15 of each year to eligible voters and their voting-age dependents,

-
- August 15 of even-numbered years to eligible voters who are serving outside the territorial limits of the United States, and
 - September 15 of even-numbered years to eligible voters in the United States.

In-hand delivery entails placing an FPCA in the hands of all eligible voters on or before the required dates. IVAOs did not ensure that UVAOs complied with the requirements for in-hand delivery of FPCAs. In fact, some UVAOs at most installations were unaware that in-hand delivery of the FPCA is required by January 15th of each year.

Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot. The FWAB can be used as a “back-up” ballot if an overseas registered uniformed absentee voter does not receive his or her regular ballot from the State or territory where the voter is registered. Some States now allow the FWAB to be used by uniformed absentee voters in elections other than general elections or for offices other than Federal offices. The majority of respondents (76 percent) stated that they were unaware of the FWAB.

Officers and senior enlisted personnel were generally more aware of the use of the FWAB than junior enlisted personnel. Registered uniformed absentee voters are eligible users of the FWAB and represent a potential increase in the voting participation rate if they do not receive an absentee ballot, or receive it late.

Military Service Academies. We also visited the Service academies to determine whether they maintained voting assistance programs for the cadets and midshipmen. At each location, we visited with the IVAO or the representative in charge of voting assistance. We did not conduct discussion groups with the cadets or midshipmen or request that they complete our questionnaires. The voting assistance programs at the Service academies varied in organizational structure and administration.

The servicing IVAO at the West Point Military Academy is assigned at the installation level. Four UVAO representatives are dedicated to 4,000 cadets. According to the IVAO, voting information was forwarded to the UVAOs at the Academy but there is no followup to verify that voting information reaches the cadets.

In contrast, the Navy and Air Force academy VAOs work directly with the midshipmen and cadets and have incorporated initiatives to target the midshipmen and cadets. At the Naval Academy, there is a VAO assigned to the Commandant of Midshipmen’s office who is dedicated to coordinating the voting assistance program. The Commandant’s VAO coordinates the efforts of 34 midshipmen voting representatives, one in each company of midshipmen, who are dedicated to supporting approximately 4,000 midshipmen. Correspondence and activities are coordinated by the Commandant’s VAO and sent through the company voting representatives to each midshipman. Additionally, both the Naval Academy and Air Force Academy Web sites had an area dedicated to voting assistance.

Although the Air Force Academy IVAO had only one cadet representative who supported approximately 4,000 cadets, the IVAO forwarded voting information e-mails to the cadet representative who in turn forwarded the information to each cadet in the cadet wing. The IVAO was proactive in her administration of the program and received feedback as to whether voting information was being sent to each cadet. Although the academy IVAO belonged to the wing, the voting plan was coordinated and endorsed by the wing commander and academy personnel.

The implementation of the Service voting assistance programs can be improved at each of the Service academies. The Service academies need to comply with the requirements of DoD Directive 1000.4 to ensure that all cadets and midshipmen are aware of their Service's voting assistance program, receive in-hand delivery of the FPCA, and understand the absentee voting process. Additionally, each Service academy IVAO needs to ensure that the ratio of UVAOs to cadets and midshipmen is in accordance with their Service's guidance.

The Service academies offer 4-year programs of instruction and experience designed to provide cadets and midshipmen with the knowledge and character essential for leadership and the motivation to serve as career officers in their chosen career field. Each cadet and midshipman is a potential future leader in their respective Service, and in the Marine Corps, and training them in the importance of the absentee voting process may be an effective long-term solution to the command emphasis problems identified in this report.

Service Inspector General Assessments

In addition to the OIG DoD annual review of voting assistance programs, 10 U.S.C. 1566 requires the Inspectors General of the Services to annually assess their voting assistance programs. DoD Directive 1000.4 and the DoD Voting Plan also require each Service Inspector General to include command voting assistance programs as an item for specific review at every organizational level. The Directive also requires the Inspectors General of the Services to provide the OIG DoD with the results of their reviews by January 31 of each year. Those reviews are in Appendixes E, F, G, and H.

Army Inspector General. The Army Inspector General submitted the "Assessment of the FY 2003 Army Voting Assistance Program," January 22, 2004, to the OIG DoD on February 10, 2004. The Army Inspector General assessed the voting assistance programs at Army major commands and stated that he provided the Inspectors General at 24 major commands a questionnaire and a copy of a UVAO interview guide to ensure standardization in the review of elements critical to implementing an effective voting assistance program. The Army Inspector General determined that:

MACOMs [major commands] were complying with the instructions to conduct an annual assessment of The Army Voting Assistance Program. Sixty-seven percent of the MACOMs assessed were in compliance with instructions provided. Based upon the remaining 33% that were not in compliance, the assessment indicates that more emphasis needs to be

placed on this program. Fifty-three percent of all MACOMs reported receiving adequate command support at all levels for the voting assistance program.

The Army Inspector General stated that while no systemic problems were found, there were areas that could be improved. The complete Army Inspector General report is in Appendix E.

Naval Inspector General. The Naval Inspector General provided the "Report of Assessment of Navy Voting Assistance Program," February 3, 2004, to the OIG DoD on February 3, 2004. The Naval Inspector General determined that:

The Navy's Voting Assistance Program for calendar year 2003 was found lacking. To quote one Voting Assistance Officer (VAO): "Calendar year 2003 is a non-voting year" and that is how a significant portion of commands approached the program despite the fact that three governors were elected this year.

The Naval Inspector General surveyed 24 units, 5 major commands, and 3 installations. The Naval Inspector General reported that despite poor support of the program during 2003, 65 percent of the personnel surveyed knew who to contact or where to obtain an FPCA. Further, the Navy Inspector General had concerns with some of the program requirements, such as the paygrade of the SVAO and the span of control of the UVAOs. The complete Naval Inspector General report is in Appendix F.

Air Force Inspector General. The Air Force Inspector General provided the "United States Air Force Voting Report," undated, to the OIG DoD on February 4, 2004. The Air Force Inspector General stated that:

The overall assessment of the Air Force's compliance with DoD Directive 1000.4, Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP), related Air Force Instructions, and the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act is satisfactory. The Air Force, at all levels, placed increased emphasis on the voting program and associated requirements. In accordance with DoD Directive 1000.4, the Air Force evaluated the effectiveness of the voting programs at the squadron, group, wing, and command levels through scheduled unit compliance inspections during CY [calendar year] 2003.

The complete text of the Air Force Inspector General report is in Appendix G.

Marine Corps Inspector General. The Marine Corps Inspector General provided the "Annual Assessment of the USMC [U.S. Marine Corps] Federal Voting Assistance Program for 2003," February 5, 2004, to the OIG DoD on February 6, 2004. The Marine Corps Inspector General concluded that:

The Marine Corps has an effective Voter Assistance Program and complied with the reference [DoD Directive 1000.4], with the exception of discrepancies as noted below. This assessment is based upon the results of 58 independent units and major command inspections conducted during Calendar Year 2003.

The Marine Corps Inspector General further stated that although no significant problems were noted,

. . . the following discrepancies were identified at the individual unit level. Immediate action was taken to correct all discrepancies.

- a. Federal Post Card Applications were not given "in hand" to every Service member. This discrepancy is identified [Marine Corps]-wide.
- b. VAO appointment letter not in correct format or forwarded to [Marine Corps headquarters].
- c. No documentation of training being conducted for the command, voting officers or assistants.
- d. Outdated Voting Assistance Guides.
- e. VAO not listed in command telephone directory.
- f. Voting Assistance Newsletters not maintained.
- g. Voting material not displayed.
- h. Lack of familiarity with the FVAP website.
- i. Many unit Voting Officers were assigned to more than 200 Marines in larger units.

The complete text of the Marine Corps Inspector General report is in Appendix H.

FVAP Office Coordination With Election Officials

Each year, the FVAP Office contacts the chief election official in each State and the territories to propose changes to policy or legislation that would simplify absentee voting procedures. The FVAP Office was working with election officials on proposals related to the timeliness of mailed ballots, late registration procedures, and expanded use of FWABs. The FVAP Office was also working on proposals related to special State write-in absentee ballots and electronic transmission of balloting materials. The FVAP Web site includes a detailed discussion of most of the proposals.

The results of our questionnaires and discussion groups indicate that the FVAP Office should continue to work with the election officials on standardization and simplification of the absentee ballot process and for the States to provide confirmation to absentee voters on receipt of balloting materials to resolve difficulties related to overseas absentee voting. Because of the FVAP Office's continued coordination with election officials, we are not making recommendations on those issues.

Conclusion

The FVAP Office continued to provide a variety of valuable resources for uniformed absentee voters in 2003. Those resources and the timely issuance of a new DoD Directive 1000.4 and the 2004-2005 DoD Voting Plan will provide the

foundation for effective voting assistance programs. SVAO oversight and accountability, as well as command emphasis, will also ensure that DoD is doing all it can to increase voter awareness and participation in 2004.

Despite the fact that uniformed absentee voters consistently vote at a higher rate than the U.S. voting population, opportunities still exist for improvement. In our reports on the 2000 and 2002 elections, we made numerous recommendations to improve the oversight and effectiveness of the Services' voting assistance programs. We also recommended that DoD oversee Service policies to ensure consistency with DoD Directive 1000.4. Additionally, we made recommendations to the Services that they establish controls and procedures to ensure voting assistance program continuity, expedient and wide-spread dissemination of voting materials, and training of uniformed absentee voters.

We are recommending a system of accountability because this evaluation showed that prior year deficiencies still exist and that improvements are still needed. We are also making recommendations for the Services to improve their command emphasis and oversight of the voting assistance program. We recognize that absentee voting requires some initiative by the potential voter. However, DoD needs to do all that it can to ensure that any absentee member that chooses to vote has the opportunity and the resources to do so. The importance of continual voting assistance program emphasis and oversight, as well as having an effective program, cannot be overemphasized.

Many challenges to uniformed absentee voters are not within the control of DoD. The FVAP Office has made considerable progress in working with the States to make the voting process easier for absentee voters and should continue to work with election officials to resolve issues as they are identified.

Recommendations, Management Comments, and Evaluation Response

The USD(P&R) and the Navy did not comment on a draft of this report. We request that the USD(P&R) and the Navy provide comments on the final report. Table 5 (page 31) shows specific elements needed in all management comments. Evaluation response sections discuss additional comments needed about proposed actions from the Army, the Air Force, and the Marine Corps.

1. We recommend that the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness:

a. Expedite the revision and issuance of DoD Directive 1000.4, "Federal Voting Assistance Program," June 3, 2002, and the DoD Voting Plan for 2004-2005.

b. Provide oversight to ensure that Service voting assistance program regulations and Service voting plans are consistent with the requirements established by the new guidance.

2. We recommend that the Secretaries of the Army and the Navy update voting assistance program regulations to be consistent with the May 2, 2003, guidance from the Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness.

Army Comments. The Army Adjutant General stated that the Army has been responsive in efforts to improve its voting assistance program. The Army Adjutant General stated that implementing instructions for the 2004 elections satisfy the recommendations in our report on the 2002 elections.

Additionally, we received unsolicited comments from the Commanding General, U.S. Army, Europe, and Seventh Army (USAREUR). The Commanding General established the USAREUR 2004 Voting Campaign to ensure that all military personnel, DoD civilians, and their family members are provided information on registering to vote and are given the opportunity to exercise their right to vote. The USAREUR 2004 Voting Campaign includes a USAREUR Voting Action Plan that provides guidance on conducting a voting assistance program. Specifically, the USAREUR Voting Action Plan addresses training requirements, distribution of FPCAs, and command emphasis on voting and awareness. The Commanding General is also requiring that everyone in his chain of command, including rear detachment commanders, be committed to giving each soldier, civilian, and family member an informed opportunity to cast a ballot. The Commanding General should be commended for the significant improvements he plans to make to the Army voting assistance program in Europe. The USAREUR 2004 Voting Campaign and USAREUR Voting Action Plan should be reviewed by the Army SVAO and considered for dissemination to other Army major commands for use during the 2004 election year.

Evaluation Response. The comments from the Army Adjutant General are partially responsive. Although the Army did not have adequate guidance in either its 2002-2003 implementing instructions or its 1981 regulation, the current 2004-2005 implementing instructions include the updates required by the Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. The current 2004-2005 implementing instructions also include specific recommendations made in prior OIG DoD evaluation reports on DoD voting assistance programs. However, the Army 2004-2005 implementing instructions do not appear to be regulatory in nature and the 1981 regulation continues to be the most current official Army regulation.

In response to OIG DoD Report No. D-2003-072, "DoD Compliance With the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act," March 31, 2003, the Army agreed to consider its 2002-2003 implementing instructions as interim guidance pending reissuance of its 1981 regulation. The 2004-2005 implementing instructions referred to in the Army response to this year's report are posted on the Army voting assistance program Web site; however, we know of no official senior management endorsement directing or requiring compliance with the guidance. In response to the final report, we request that the Army provide documentation that the 2004-2005 implementing instructions were approved and issued to all levels of command as interim regulatory guidance (see Table 5).

3. We recommend that the Secretaries of the Military Departments and the Commandant of the Marine Corps update voting assistance program regulations, instructions, and orders as soon as the new DoD Directive 1000.4 is issued.

Army Comments. The Army Adjutant General stated that Army Regulation 608-20 is under revision to comply with the current DoD Directive 1000.4 and is expected to be published in the 2nd quarter of FY 2005.

Air Force Comments. The Director, Learning and Force Development in the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel concurred and stated that the current Air Force voting instruction would be updated upon publication of the revised DoD Directive 1000.4.

Marine Corps Comments. The Inspector General of the Marine Corps concurred.

Evaluation Response. The comments from the Army Adjutant General are nonresponsive. In our opinion, publication of a revised Army Regulation 608-20 in the 2nd quarter of FY 2005 is not timely. Current Army Regulation 608-20, "Voting by Personnel of the Armed Forces," August 15, 1981, does not comply with the May 2003 guidance from the Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness or the current DoD Directive 1000.4. In our reports on the 2000 and 2002 elections, we recommended that the Army update Army Regulation 608-20 to be consistent with DoD guidance. In response to our report on the 2002 elections, the Army stated that it planned to issue a revised Army Regulation 608-20 by October 2003. The Army is the only Service that has not updated its regulatory guidance after the June 2002 revision to DoD Directive 1000.4. Additionally, Army Regulation 608-20 does not parallel the current Army implementing instructions discussed in Recommendation 2.

We believe that timely publication of Army Regulation 608-20 is critical to a compliant and effective Army voting assistance program, but recognize that continued DoD delays in issuing a revised DoD Directive 1000.4 will impact the timeliness for publishing the revised Army regulation. However, the Army should issue its revised regulation shortly after the issuance of the revised DoD Directive 1000.4 and should have been in the process of revising its regulation in accordance with the draft DoD Directive 1000.4 that was issued for comment in September 2003. In response to the final report, we request that the Army reconsider the timing of reissuing Army Regulation 608-20 (see Table 5).

Comments from the Air Force Director, Learning and Force Development and from the Inspector General of the Marine Corps are responsive, but lacked a completion date for planned actions (see Table 5).

4. We recommend that the Secretaries of the Military Departments and the Commandant of the Marine Corps require that Senior Service Voting Representatives:

a. develop a reporting system to monitor throughout the year a programs' compliance with the requirements of DoD Directive 1000.4 and Service voting guidance.

b. ensure junior enlisted personnel and other first-time voters are provided voting assistance information during general military training sessions or command orientations.

Army Comments. The Army Adjutant General stated that the Army has been responsive in developing reporting systems to monitor yearly program compliance during Federal election years and plans to implement additional reporting requirements during non-Federal election years. Additionally, the Army is proceeding with an evaluation to develop an implementation plan to ensure junior enlisted personnel and other first-time voters are provided voting assistance information.

Air Force Comments. The Air Force Director, Learning and Force Development concurred and stated that the Air Force SVAO will monitor the health of the Air Force voting assistance program using some of the recommendations within this report. The Air Force Director also stated that Air Force Instruction 36-3107 requires IVAOs to provide registration materials and a briefing on the absentee voting process at all individualized, newcomer, treatment, and orientation programs. The Air Force Director also stated that the Air Force SVAO will work with the office responsible for the First Term Airman Center program to establish a requirement for the Air Force voting assistance program as a mandatory briefing. Further, the Air Force SVAO will coordinate with various military training programs to ensure the Air Force voting assistance program is included in appropriate curriculums, such as basic training, officer training school, and professional military education.

Marine Corps Comments. The Inspector General of the Marine Corps concurred and stated that the Marine Corps order will require publishing the results of command inspections and SVAO followup and assist visits. The results of those inspections and visits will be forwarded to the Marine Corps SVAO. The Inspector General of the Marine Corps stated that commands at all levels are providing voter awareness training using materials available on the Marine Corps voting Web site. The Inspector General also stated that the Marine Corps will continue its vigilance and assessments to strengthen its commitment to provide every Marine the opportunity to vote.

Evaluation Response. The comments from the Army Adjutant General are partially responsive. The 2004-2005 voting assistance program guidance for the conduct of the Army voting assistance program contains significant improvements for monitoring the effectiveness of the Army voting assistance program. The guidance requires quarterly reports listing all installation VAOs, a confirmation of an installation's compliance with the requirement to deliver FPCAs in-hand, three status reports on installation events held or planned to emphasize voter awareness,

and an after-action report. Those requirements should be included in the new Army Regulation 608-20 discussed in our response to Recommendation 3. In response to the final report, we request that the Army provide additional details on how it plans to monitor program compliance throughout the year at all levels of command. We also request that the Army provide additional details on how it plans to ensure junior enlisted personnel and other first-time voters are provided voting assistance information (see Table 5).

The comments from the Air Force Director, Learning and Force Development are partially responsive. In response to the final report, we request that the Air Force provide additional comments describing how it will develop and implement a reporting system to monitor the Air Force voting assistance program's compliance with the requirements of DoD Directive 1000.4 (see Table 5).

The comments from the Inspector General of the Marine Corps are partially responsive. We believe the Marine Corps SVAO's active participation in numerous Marine Corps inspections of installation and unit voting assistance programs is an effective oversight tool. The results of periodic command inspections and SVAO followup and assist visits should assist the Marine Corps SVAO in establishing continual oversight of the effectiveness of the Marine Corps voting assistance program. However, because the Inspector General of the Marine Corps does not provide coverage of all Marine Corps units, we believe a reporting system should be established to monitor Marine Corps compliance with the requirements of DoD Directive 1000.4.

The Inspector General stated that proper training and education of personnel is the key to an effective program. The Marine Corps has developed a comprehensive voting assistance program Web site that should enable Marine Corps VAOs, at all levels of command, to provide voting awareness training. In response to the final report, we request that the Marine Corps describe how it will monitor installation and unit compliance with DoD Directive 1000.4 and how it will ensure that voting assistance training is accomplished for junior enlisted personnel and other first-time voters (see Table 5).

5. We recommend that the Secretaries of the Army and the Air Force establish the Service Voting Action Officer as a full-time position.

Army Comments. The Army Adjutant General stated that the Army has improved its voting assistance program by employing one civilian employee with an additional primary duty as the SVAO.

Air Force Comments. The Air Force Director, Learning and Force Development nonconcurred, stating that the Air Force voting assistance program is run by two military personnel. The Air Force Director did agree that a full-time civilian position could effectively carry out the Air Force voting assistance program; however, given the nature of the election calendar and gaps in voting intensity, he stated that he believed a civilian employee with additional duties would be more feasible.

Evaluation Response. The comments from the Army Adjutant General are not responsive. The Army SVAO is a civilian employee with responsibility for the

voting assistance program as an additional primary duty. In our opinion, the duties and responsibilities of the Army SVAO support the need for a full-time position.

During 2003, the three Army locations we visited had ineffective programs. For example, 73 percent of Army respondents stated that there was not enough or no emphasis placed on voting in 2003. Additionally, 37 percent of the Army respondents did not know the Army had a voting assistance program and 75 percent did not know who their UVAO was. Additionally, the Army Inspector General reported that one-third of the Army major commands were not in compliance with Army voting assistance program instructions.

It is DoD policy for the Services to support uniformed absentee voters in all years with elections for Federal, State, or local office. The importance of full-time SVAO duties and responsibilities have been recognized by the Navy and Marine Corps. Those Services recognized that a critical element for an effective Service voting assistance program is the continual oversight and monitoring of the program by the SVAO. We believe that the need for emphasis and oversight of the voting assistance program and the continued deployment and wide dispersion of active duty personnel justify the establishment of a full-time SVAO position. In response to the final report, we request that the Army reconsider its position on the establishment of the SVAO as a full-time position (see Table 5).

The comments from the Air Force Director, Learning and Force Development are not responsive; however, the actions taken by the Air Force to explore the feasibility of a civilian SVAO is a positive action. In our opinion, the deficiencies cited in this report support the need for full-time oversight of and involvement with the Air Force voting assistance program. For example, 37 percent of the Air Force respondents did not know who their UVAO was. In response to the final report, we request that the Air Force reconsider its position on establishing a full-time SVAO (see Table 5).

6. We recommend that the Secretaries of the Navy and Air Force and the Commandant of the Marine Corps consider establishing the Service Voting Action Officer as a civilian position.

Air Force Comments. The Air Force Director, Learning and Force Development nonconcurred, stating that the Air Force voting assistance program is run by two military personnel. The Air Force Director also stated that his office will determine whether a civilian SVAO, with additional duties, would be feasible.

Marine Corps Comments. The Inspector General of the Marine Corps concurred.

Evaluation Response. The comments from the Air Force Director, Learning and Force Development are partially responsive to the intent of the recommendation. In response to the final report, we request that the Air Force provide its decision about establishing the Air Force SVAO as a civilian position and the rationale for the decision (see Table 5).

The comments from the Inspector General of the Marine Corps are responsive, but lacked a completion date for the planned action (see Table 5).

7. We recommend that the Secretaries of the Military Departments require senior military personnel, such as the Army and Air Force Chiefs of Staff, the Chief of Naval Operations, and the Commandant of the Marine Corps, issue memorandums to all levels of command, reemphasizing the importance of the voting assistance program, continued command emphasis, and implementation of the program.

Army Comments. The Army Adjutant General stated that correspondence to all levels of command emphasizing the importance of the voting assistance program is being prepared for the Army Chief of Staff. Additionally, the Army is conducting a public affairs campaign that included an interview with the Army News Service, a video spot taped by the Adjutant General, and a story on the voting assistance program for the July 2004 issue of *Soldiers* magazine.

Air Force Comments. The Air Force Director, Learning and Force Development concurred.

Marine Corps Comments. The Inspector General of the Marine Corps nonconcurred and stated that the Marine Corps has issued guidance to all levels of command reemphasizing the importance of the voting assistance program and continued command emphasis. The Inspector General of the Marine Corps also stated that two All Marine messages from the Commandant of the Marine Corps and two Marine Corps Administrative messages have been issued concerning the implementation of the Marine Corps voting assistance program. Additionally, one All Marine message and one Marine Corps Administrative message are planned for release in the summer of 2004.

Evaluation Response. The Army comments are responsive, and no further comments are required.

The Air Force Director, Learning and Force Development comments are partially responsive. In response to the final report, we request that the Air Force provide details on how it plans to emphasize its voting assistance program at all levels of command (see Table 5).

Although the Inspector General of the Marine Corps nonconcurred, actions taken and planned by the Marine Corps to emphasize the importance of the Marine Corps voting assistance program satisfy the intent of the recommendation. No further comments are required.

8. We recommend that the Service Inspectors General provide the voting assistance program inspection results to their Service Voting Action Officer on a continuing basis.

Army Comments. The Army Adjutant General stated that the Army Inspector General annually provides the results of voting assistance program inspections to the SVAO.

Air Force Comments. The Air Force Director, Learning and Force Development concurred.

Marine Corps Comments. The Inspector General of the Marine Corps concurred and stated that the results of inspections and followup and assist visits will be forwarded to the Marine Corps SVAO.

Evaluation Response. The comments from the Army Adjutant General are partially responsive. Although the Army states that the inspection results are annually provided to the SVAO, we believe that inspection results should be provided to the SVAO on a continual basis. Service Inspectors General inspection results are a valuable tool that SVAOs can use to identify areas needing improvement and take corrective action throughout the year. In response to the final report, we request that the Army reconsider its position and provide specific details on actions to be accomplished (see Table 5).

We consider the comments from the Air Force and the Marine Corps to be responsive; no further comments are required.

Management Comments Required

The USD(P&R) and the Services are requested to comment on the items indicated with an X in Table 5.

Table 5. Management Comments Required				
<u>Recommendation Number</u>	<u>Component</u>	<u>Concur/ Nonconcur</u>	<u>Proposed Action</u>	<u>Completion Date</u>
1.a. and 1.b.	USD(P&R)	X	X	X
2.	Army		X	X
3.	Army	X	X	X
4.a. and 4.b.	Army		X	X
5.	Army	X	X	X
8.	Army	X	X	X
2.	Navy	X	X	X
3.	Navy	X	X	X
4.a. and 4.b.	Navy	X	X	X
6.	Navy	X	X	X
7.	Navy	X	X	X
8.	Navy	X	X	X
3.	Air Force			X
4.a.	Air Force		X	X
4.b.	Air Force			X
5.	Air Force	X	X	X
6.	Air Force		X	X
7.	Air Force		X	X
3.	Marine Corps			X
4.a. and 4.b.	Marine Corps		X	X
6.	Marine Corps			X

Appendix A. Scope and Methodology

The evaluation focused on DoD and Service voting assistance programs for the 2003 elections. We reviewed laws, policies, and guidance dated from August 1981 through October 2003 relating to the absentee ballot process and the Service voting assistance programs. We reviewed DoD and Service implementing guidance for their voting assistance programs. Additionally, we reviewed DoD and Service-level draft guidance that is expected to be issued in 2004. We assessed the effectiveness of each Service's voting assistance program based on perceptions of uniformed absentee voters and the compliance of programs with requirements of the Act and DoD Directive 1000.4. We also obtained information relating to the voting assistance program for the 2003 elections from the FVAP Office and interviewed personnel involved with voting assistance programs at the FVAP Office and the Services. In future years, the requirement to evaluate DoD voting assistance programs will be accomplished by the Deputy Inspector General for Inspections and Policy. To facilitate that transition, two inspectors from the Deputy's office participated in site visits at 4 of the 10 installations visited.

For the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force, we selected one large and one small overseas installation using population data for active duty personnel provided to us by the Defense Manpower Data Center. In CONUS, we selected one location from each of the four Services. We selected sites that were not visited during our evaluations after the 2000 and 2002 elections. At each location we conducted unannounced assessments of the installation's absentee voting assistance program. We also worked with personnel from the Coalition Provisional Authority to assess the effectiveness of the absentee voting assistance program for uniformed absentee voters in Iraq. However, operational commitments precluded us from obtaining information on the effectiveness of voting assistance programs in Iraq during 2003. We will suggest that the Deputy Inspector General for Inspections and Policy include Iraq in the 2004 evaluation.

At the selected installations, we used a two-phased approach to assess the voting assistance program. The first phase included administering our questionnaire to 1,125 uniformed absentee voters. A copy of the questionnaire is in Appendix B. Nothing in the questionnaire or in the processing of the questionnaires allowed us to identify a specific respondent. Information gathered from the questionnaires included respondents' perceptions of command emphasis of the voting assistance program, their understanding of the absentee voting process, and problems they encountered during the 2003 elections. Many of the questions were based on the respondents' perceptions; the accuracy of those perceptions cannot be validated. Questionnaire respondents also participated in discussion groups, where we asked them to describe their experiences with the absentee ballot process.

The second phase of our assessment involved interviewing IVAOs and UVAOs regarding the implementation of the voting assistance program. We also interviewed the Senior Service Voting Representatives or their SVAO.

DoD civilians assigned to the locations we visited were not included in our evaluation. Additionally, we did not include U.S. citizens residing near the six overseas locations that we selected for evaluation.

Installations were determined to have effective, partially effective, or ineffective voting assistance programs. For the 10 installations visited, we established criteria based on the requirements of DoD Directive 1000.4 and the 2002-2003 DoD Voting Plan. Additionally, we used the results of group discussions at each location to determine the effectiveness of each installation's voting assistance program. Our determination was based on a subjective evaluation of how well each installation had implemented the voting assistance program.

Additionally, we visited each Service academy to determine the scope of their voting assistance programs. During the visits, we interviewed IVAOs or their representatives and discussed controls over installation absentee voting procedures, the level of assistance provided by UVAOs, and the degree to which the voting assistance program had been implemented. We discussed how the cadets and midshipmen at the academies received voting information and the extent to which the voting assistance information reached the cadets and midshipmen. No survey or discussion groups were held with cadets, midshipmen, or academy UVAOs. Therefore, we cannot make conclusions concerning the overall effectiveness of the voting assistance programs at the academies.

We performed this evaluation from August 2003 through March 2004 according to standards implemented by the OIG DoD. Service Inspectors General reports are required by 10 U.S.C. 1566 to be reflected in the OIG DoD report to Congress on the effectiveness of and compliance with voting assistance programs. Those reports are in Appendixes E, F, G, and H. We did not validate the Service Inspectors General reports.

In a statistical sense, the representativeness of a sample is determined by whether the method of its selection was random or involved human judgment. Our samples were judgmental. The results of the questionnaires discussed in this report are representative only of the questionnaire respondents and should not be generalized to the entire DoD or any Service. In addition, the numerical results of questionnaires used in our reviews of the 2000 and 2002 elections should not be compared with the results of the questionnaires from this evaluation.

We selected a non-statistical, judgmental sample of six overseas installations in Germany, Iceland, Portugal, Spain, and the United Kingdom and four CONUS installations. Questionnaires were administered to judgmentally selected units at each installation. Upon arrival at the installations, we requested information from the installation point of contact on the total installation population and the population of each unit at the installation. For the locations visited, we selected a judgmental sample of units that represented at least 20 percent of the installation population. We then requested that approximately 100 active duty personnel from the selected units (34 junior enlisted personnel, paygrades E-1 through E-4; 33 senior enlisted personnel, paygrades E-5 through E-9; and 33 officers) be available to respond to our questionnaires and participate in our discussion groups. At all locations, we requested that as many active duty dependents and UVAOs as possible also respond to our questionnaires and participate in the discussion groups. Participation did not always include the full number of requested personnel. Participation of dependents was particularly low at all installations. The dependent responses are included with the Service member

responses and are considered part of the uniformed absentee voter population throughout the report.

We also administered questionnaires to UVAOs at eight locations. However, some UVAOs told us that they had been appointed shortly before or after our unannounced arrival. Because the UVAOs had been recently appointed, they were not aware of their responsibilities and had not been trained. Due to the anonymous nature of the UVAO questionnaire that we used, we were unable to determine which questionnaires represented the UVAOs who had been recently appointed. As a result, the UVAO questionnaire results are not included in this report because we would not expect newly appointed UVAOs to be knowledgeable in the absentee voting process. However, we did conduct discussion groups with UVAOs. The results of those discussions are presented in this report.

Analytical Approach. We input each individual questionnaire response into a computer data file. The records in the data file also do not identify participating personnel. We then transmitted the data file to members of the Quantitative Methods Division, OIG DoD for analysis.

Our overall analytical approach to the responses was based on using the information collected with minimal modification. We applied edits to ensure the internal consistency of each individual's responses. We performed the edits and the analyses of the responses using the Statistical Analysis System (SAS), Version 8.2.

Use of Computer-Processed Data. We relied on computer-processed data from the Defense Manpower Data Center to establish relative sizes of installation populations. We also relied on computer-processed data for relative sizes of unit populations at installations visited. Because we are not projecting the questionnaire results, the accuracy of the databases is not relevant to the evaluation results and we did not evaluate their accuracy.

Use of Technical Assistance. Personnel from the Quantitative Methods Division, OIG DoD assisted with questionnaire development and data analysis.

Management Control Program Review

DoD Directive 5010.38, "Management Control (MC) Program," August 26, 1996, and DoD Instruction 5010.40, "Management Control (MC) Program Procedures," August 28, 1996, require DoD organizations to implement a comprehensive system of management controls that provides reasonable assurance that programs are operating as intended and to evaluate the adequacy of the controls.

Scope of the Review of the Management Control Program. We reviewed controls related to the adequacy of policies and the oversight of the implementation of Service voting assistance programs to ensure that uniformed absentee voters were provided the maximum opportunity to vote. We also assessed the Services' self-evaluation applicable to those controls.

Adequacy of Management Controls. We identified management control weaknesses in Service voting assistance programs as defined by DoD Instruction 5010.40 regarding compliance with laws and regulations concerning Service voting assistance programs. The Services did not have adequate policy and oversight to ensure that all uniformed absentee voters were informed and trained on all aspects of absentee voting or that they were given the maximum opportunity to exercise their right to vote. Because of the limited number of locations visited, we are not making a judgment on the materiality of the weaknesses identified. A copy of the report will be provided to the senior official responsible for management controls in the Office of the USD(P&R), the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and the Marine Corps.

Adequacy of Management Self-Evaluation. The Army, the Air Force, and the Marine Corps did not identify voting assistance programs as an assessable unit. The Navy included its voting assistance program as an assessable unit for review and relied on required scheduled inspections to assess the program. The Navy inspections commented on the weaknesses identified by this evaluation. None of the Services identified or reported management control weaknesses in their voting assistance programs on their annual statements of assurance.

Prior Coverage

During the last 5 years, the General Accounting Office (GAO), the OIG DoD, and the Department of State have issued five reports discussing the FVAP and overseas absentee voting. Unrestricted GAO reports can be accessed over the Internet at <http://www.gao.gov>. Unrestricted OIG DoD reports can be accessed at <http://www.dodig.osd.mil/audit/reports>.

GAO

GAO Report No. GAO-01-1026, "Elections: Voting Assistance to Military and Overseas Citizens Should Be Improved," September 28, 2001

GAO Report No. GAO-01-470, "Elections: The Scope of Congressional Authority in Election Administration," March 2001

OIG DoD



OIG DoD Report No. D-2003-072, "DoD Compliance With the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act," March 31, 2003

OIG DoD Report No. D-2001-145, "Overseas Absentee Ballot Handling in DoD," June 22, 2001

Department of State

United States Department of State Report No. 01-FP-M-045, "Review of Implementation of the Federal Voter Assistance Program," August 2001

Appendix B. Uniformed Absentee Voter Questionnaire

DoD Inspector General	RCS Exempt						
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"><div style="text-align: center;"><h2>Absentee Voter Questionnaire — Active Duty & Dependents</h2></div></div>							
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"><div style="width: 48%; border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">Concerns About This Questionnaire</div><div style="width: 48%; border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">Completing This Questionnaire</div></div>							
<p>Will my questionnaire responses be kept anonymous? Yes. There is no information being collected that could be used to identify individuals. Your responses will be combined with information from other DoD personnel to report the views and experiences of groups of personnel. Do not use any personal names anywhere on this questionnaire.</p> <p>Why me? Installations have been selected to solicit information from DoD personnel regarding the absentee ballot process. Information collected in this questionnaire will be used to report DoD personnel awareness and satisfaction with the absentee ballot voting process. Your responses are important to provide us with insights to this process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This is not a test.• Use a blue or black pen or dark pencil.• Select answers that you believe are most appropriate.• Fill in the appropriate circle or circles.						
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"><div style="width: 48%; border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">Privacy Notice</div><div style="width: 48%; border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">Demographic and Voting Questions</div></div>							
<p>Authority: This questionnaire is being conducted by the IG DoD under authority of Section 1566, chapter 80 of title 10, United States Code.</p> <p>Principal Purpose: Information collected will be used to determine DoD personnel awareness and satisfaction with the procedures and resources used to support the absentee ballot voting process. This information may assist in the formulation of policies to improve the absentee ballot voting process.</p> <p>Routine Uses: None.</p> <p>Disclosure: Providing information on this questionnaire is voluntary. There is no penalty if you choose not to respond. However, maximum participation is encouraged. No identifying information is being collected that could identify individuals. Only summary information will be reported.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What is your status? Fill in <u>one</u> circle.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="radio"/> Active Duty<input type="radio"/> Active Duty Dependent 2. What is your/your sponsor's Service? Fill in <u>one</u> circle.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="radio"/> Army<input type="radio"/> Army Reserve<input type="radio"/> Army National Guard<input type="radio"/> Navy<input type="radio"/> Naval Reserve<input type="radio"/> Air Force<input type="radio"/> Air Force Reserve<input type="radio"/> Air National Guard<input type="radio"/> Marine Corps<input type="radio"/> Marine Corps Reserve<input type="radio"/> OSD field activity or other DoD Agency 3. What is your/your sponsor's rate or rank? Fill in <u>one</u> circle.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="radio"/> E1 – E4<input type="radio"/> E5 – E9<input type="radio"/> WO1 – WO5 or O1 – O10 4. While in the military or as a dependent, how many times have you voted absentee? Fill in <u>one</u> circle.<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"><tr><td style="width: 50%;"><input type="radio"/> None</td><td style="width: 50%;"><input type="radio"/> 3 - 4</td></tr><tr><td><input type="radio"/> 1</td><td><input type="radio"/> 5 or more</td></tr><tr><td><input type="radio"/> 2</td><td></td></tr></table>	<input type="radio"/> None	<input type="radio"/> 3 - 4	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 5 or more	<input type="radio"/> 2	
<input type="radio"/> None	<input type="radio"/> 3 - 4						
<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 5 or more						
<input type="radio"/> 2							

5. At your installation or ship how much emphasis was placed on voting during 2003? Fill in one circle.

☐ Too much
☐ Sufficient
☐ Not enough
☐ None

6. Do you know that your Service has a voting assistance program? Fill in one circle.

☐ Yes
☐ No

7. Do you know who your Unit Voting Assistance Officer is? Fill in one circle.

☐ Yes
☐ No → SKIP TO QUESTION 9

8. During 2003, how satisfied are/were you with the performance of your Unit Voting Assistance Officer in the following areas? Fill in one circle for each item.

—Satisfied
 —Somewhat satisfied
 —Somewhat dissatisfied
 —Dissatisfied
 —Did not use

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ a. Availability to provide assistance
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ b. Knowledge of the election process
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ c. Provided materials upon request

9. During 2003, have you obtained voting information from the following sources? Fill in one circle for each item.

—Yes
 —No

☐ a. Voting Information Newsletter
☐ b. Service voting Web site
☐ c. Unit briefings
☐ d. Installation Voting Officer
☐ e. Unit Voting Assistance Officer
☐ f. Friend
☐ g. Mailings
☐ h. Voting drives
☐ i. Posters
☐ j. Other _____

10. During 2003, were you aware of the voting and communication tools listed below? Fill in one circle for each item.

—Fully aware
 —Somewhat aware
 —Unaware

☐ ☐ ☐ a. The Federal Voting Assistance Program Web site that provides voting-related information and resources
☐ ☐ ☐ b. 2002-03 Voting Assistance Guide that provides State-by-State information that enables you to register and vote absentee
☐ ☐ ☐ c. A Service or Installation voting assistance program Web site.

11. Do you have Internet access to the World Wide Web (www)? Fill in one circle.

☐ Yes
☐ No

12. Overall, how satisfied are/were you with the following voting information and communication tools during 2003? Fill in one circle for each item.

—Satisfied
 —Somewhat satisfied
 —Somewhat dissatisfied
 —Dissatisfied
 —Did not use

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ a. The Federal Voting Assistance Program Web site that provides voting-related information and resources
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ b. 2002-03 Voting Assistance Guide that provides State-by-State information that enables you to register and vote absentee
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ c. A Service or Installation voting assistance program Web site.

13. To what extent do you understand the absentee ballot process? Fill in one circle.

☐ Completely
☐ Large extent
☐ Moderate extent
☐ Small extent
☐ Not at all

14. Are you registered to vote? Fill in one circle.

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don't know

15. Were you aware that the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) can be used for voter registration or to request an absentee ballot? Fill in one circle.

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

16. Were you aware that the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (Standard Form 186) is a backup ballot that can be used if you did not receive your regular absentee ballot? Fill in one circle.

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

17. The following are potential problems of the absentee ballot voting process. Which, if any, applied to you during 2003? Fill in all circles that apply.

- ☐ a. I do not understand the absentee voting process
☐ b. Voting procedures complicated
☐ c. Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) confusing
☐ d. No response/delayed response to FPCA
☐ e. FPCA returned because it was not accepted by election officials
☐ f. Having to submit FPCA twice: once to register and once to request a ballot
☐ g. Having to submit FPCA for primary and general elections
☐ h. Having to complete FPCA and State registration forms
☐ i. Absentee ballot confusing
☐ j. Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot confusing
☐ k. Voting assistance guide confusing
☐ l. Not enough information on candidates/issues
☐ m. Difficulty in maintaining current mailing address with local election officials
☐ n. No way to know if election officials received FPCA
☐ o. Absentee ballot arrived too late
☐ p. Absentee ballot never arrived
☐ q. Other—Please specify: _____
☐ r. I did not have any problems

18. Have you voted or do you intend to vote in any local, State, or special Federal elections in 2003? Fill in one circle.

- ☐ Yes → DO NOT ANSWER QUESTIONS 19 OR 20. YOU ARE FINISHED
☐ No → ANSWER QUESTIONS 19 AND 20

19. Which of the following are reasons why you did not or do not intend to vote in any local, State, or special Federal elections in 2003? Fill in all circles that apply.

- ☐ a. I was not interested in voting
☐ b. I did not know if there was an election in my voting jurisdiction
☐ c. There were no elections in my voting jurisdiction
☐ d. I did not think I was eligible to vote
☐ e. I was not familiar with the candidates or issues
☐ f. I had no candidate preference
☐ g. I did not think my vote would matter
☐ h. I did not know how to get an absentee ballot
☐ i. I did not know my State of legal residence for voting
☐ j. My absentee ballot arrived too late
☐ k. My absentee ballot did not arrive at all
☐ l. I was discouraged by the process of absentee voting
☐ m. I was concerned that voting might affect my Federal or State tax obligation
☐ n. Other—Please specify: _____

20. Of the reasons listed in Question 19, write the letter ("a" through "n") that was the most important reason that you did not or will not vote in any local, State, or special Federal elections in 2003.

Letter corresponding to most important reason: _____

Appendix C. Commands and Installations Visited

Combatant Commands

U.S. European Command headquarters, Stuttgart-Vaihingen, Germany

Department of the Army

Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs)

Human Resources Command, Alexandria, Virginia

The Adjutant General Directorate, Alexandria, Virginia

U.S. Army, Europe, and Seventh Army, Heidelberg, Germany

1st Personnel Command, Schwetzingen, Germany

98th Area Support Group, Wuerzburg, Germany

279th Base Support Battalion, Bamberg, Germany*

6th Area Support Group, Stuttgart-Vaihingen, Germany*

Fort Lewis, Washington*

U.S. Military Academy, New York

Department of the Navy

Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs)

U.S. Marine Corps headquarters, Quantico, Virginia

U.S. Naval Forces Europe headquarters, United Kingdom

Navy Personnel Command, Millington, Tennessee

Naval Air Station Keflavik, Iceland*

Naval Station Rota, Spain*

Naval Air Station Oceana, Virginia Beach, Virginia*

Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, South Carolina*

U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland

Mid-Atlantic Region Senior Voting Assistance Office, Norfolk, Virginia

Department of the Air Force

Assistant Secretary of the Air Force (Manpower and Reserve Affairs)

Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, Washington, D.C.

Air Force Personnel Center, Randolph Air Force Base, Texas

U.S. Air Forces in Europe, Ramstein, Germany

Royal Air Force Lakenheath, United Kingdom*

Lajes Field, Azores, Portugal*

Luke Air Force Base, Arizona*

U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colorado

*Locations where uniformed absentee voter questionnaires were administered.

Appendix D. Voting Assistance Program Best Practices

Several installations and the Marine Corps SVAO had developed initiatives to encourage participation either during 2003 or the upcoming 2004 elections. The following are some of those best practices that should assist uniformed absentee voters in understanding the absentee voting process.

2003 Initiatives. At Naval Air Station Keflavik, the IVAO raised voter awareness by posting excerpts of the FVAP *Voting Information News* around the installation. During 2003, voting information was also disseminated using the Plan of the Day and the Plan of the Week. Additionally, the IVAO distributed and displayed posters to publicize his phone number and the FVAP Web site.

At Luke Air Force Base, a voter registration drive was completed at the end of 2002 for the 2003 elections. During 2003, the IVAO maintained an installation voting information Web site. He encouraged UVAOs to focus on the States where their unit members were registered, to include reminding the voters of deadlines and election dates. He also encouraged UVAOs to have a voting information Web site available at the squadron and unit level. He raised awareness of 2003 elections by focusing on States with high military populations. Additionally, the IVAO required all VAOs to receive training in 2003 to ensure they could properly assist potential voters.

2004 Initiatives. During our visits to 10 installations and the 3 Service academies, some IVAOs stated how they planned to emphasize absentee voting and increase awareness for the 2004 Federal election year. The following initiatives were not in place during 2003; however, we believe they may result in increased awareness and emphasis of Service voting assistance programs for the 2004 elections.

At Luke Air Force Base, the IVAO planned to advertise and promote the voting assistance program at wing-level events. Additionally, he planned to require units to include voting assistance on the unit in-processing checklist. All new personnel in a unit will be required to meet the UVAO during in-processing.

At the Air Force Academy, the IVAO planned to have a voter registration drive aimed directly at the cadets. She planned to use the base newspaper to motivate voters to register and vote, to provide information about upcoming elections, and to publicize the voting information line and relevant Web sites. In addition, she planned to publicize the voting assistance program and voting information using the public announcement system at sporting events, such as football games.

The Marine Corps Voting Office initiated the design, development, and production of a film clip that emphasizes the importance of voting. The clip shows imagery of the Capitol building and a Marine Corps voting slogan, "It matters to you who roams these halls," followed by footage of Marine Corps missions in CONUS and Iraq, and ending with the same Capitol building scene and the slogan, "Our Country, Our Leaders, Our Choice, VOTE." The film clip

will run after the playing of the national anthem in Marine Corps movie theaters, on the Marine Corps Web site, and on local military television stations beginning April 15, 2004. The same imagery was used in the production of Marine Corps posters and installation banners emphasizing the Marine Corps voting assistance program.

Appendix E. Department of the Army Inspector General Report



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
1700 ARMY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20310-1700

SAIG-ZA

22 January 2004

MEMORANDUM THRU

DIRECTOR OF THE ARMY STAFF *initials*

VICE CHIEF OF STAFF, ARMY *cut 2 Feb 04*

FOR CHIEF OF STAFF, ARMY

SUBJECT: Assessment of the FY 2003 Army Voting Assistance Program

1. **Purpose:** To provide the CSA results of the Inspector General's annual assessment of the Army's Voting Assistance Program.

2. **Background:**

a. Title 10, Section 1566, United States Code, dated 28 December 2002 requires the Inspector General of each Service to conduct an annual review of the effectiveness and compliance of their voting assistance program. Also, Department of Defense (DOD) Directive 1000.4, dated 3 June 2002 requires each Service to review their voting assistance programs annually at every level of command to ensure compliance with DOD regulations and public law. Paragraph 5.3 of the directive further requires The Inspector General of each Service to report the results of the assessment to the DOD Inspector General by 31 January of each year.

b. The Department of the Army Inspector General (DAIG) assessed the Voting Assistance Program by Major Army Commands (MACOMs) to determine their program effectiveness and compliance. Notification of this requirement was provided to MACOMs in a memorandum dated 15 April 2003 and they were required to provide their responses to the DAIG by 31 December 2003.

3. **Assessment Goal:** The goal of the FY 2003 DAIG Voting Assistance assessment was to evaluate the effectiveness of the Army's Voting Assistance Program and compliance with Army and DOD directives.

4. **Assessment Methodology:** To achieve the assessment goal, the DAIG provided 24 MACOM Inspectors General, (CONUS and OCONUS), a questionnaire and a copy of the Unit Voting Assistance Officer Interview Guide. These documents provided the standardization necessary in the review of elements critical to implementing an effective voting assistance program. They applied to Active, National Guard, and Reserve

SUBJECT: Assessment of the FY 2003 Army Voting Assistance Program

Components alike. This method allowed for the determination of whether current policies and directives are effectively incorporated into the Army's Voting Assistance Program.

5. Assessment Results:

a. The Inspector General determined that MACOMs were complying with the instructions to conduct an annual assessment of The Army Voting Assistance Program. Sixty-seven percent of the MACOMs assessed were in compliance with instructions provided. Based upon the remaining 33% that were not in compliance, the assessment indicates that more emphasis needs to be placed on this program. Fifty-three percent of all MACOMs reported receiving adequate command support at all levels for the voting assistance program. While there were no program systemic problems or significant discrepancies within the MACOMs, the following can be improved upon:

(1) There is no Army Voting Assistance Program guidance addressing the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve.

(2) There is no standard system in place across installations or even a method to track the appointment of Voting Assistance Officers within installations.

(3) Voting Assistance Officers are not known throughout the installation.

b. Non-compliance within the MACOMs indicates a need to educate the military community about the voting assistance process, which would further facilitate the right to vote.

c. GOOD NEWS: Most (63%) of the MACOMs personnel were aware of the Federal Voting Assistance Program website. In some instances, when a voting assistance officer did not receive formal training, the MACOM voting assistance officer instructed them to take the training on the website until formal training was available.

6. Root Cause of Discrepancies Noted:

a. No person designated on orders as the Voting Assistance Officer.

b. No person or section clearly identified as being responsible for ensuring that absentee ballots were distributed to Soldiers and authorized family members.

c. Soldiers were unfamiliar with the program.

7. Recommendations:

a. HQDA G1. Update the 15 August 1981 version of AR 608-20, Voting by Personnel of the Armed Forces. Specify guidance for the Army Reserves and National

SUBJECT: Assessment of the FY 2003 Army Voting Assistance Program

Guard. Implement a standard policy requiring documentation of training and re-certification of voting assistance officers annually. (Update of this 1981 regulation was also a DAIG recommendation in last year's DAIG Voting Assistance Reports, approved by the CSA.)

b. **Installation Inspectors General.** Teach and train personnel as required or as appropriate, and assist in the clarification of existing regulatory requirements, programs, policies, and procedures.

c. **Installation Commanders.** Ensure the program receives continued command emphasis to succeed by giving every eligible Soldier, DA Civilian, and family member the opportunity to vote.

d. **Commanders.** Promote awareness of the Voting Assistance Program. Demonstrate the need for leaders to educate Soldiers and give them the maximum opportunity to exercise their right to vote.


e. **Installation Voting Assistance Officers.**

(1) Implement a standard policy requiring documentation of training and re-certification of Voting Assistance Officers annually. (Repeat recommendation from last year.)

(2) Utilize the 2004-2005 Army Voting Assistance website and DODIG website.

(3) Utilize a variety of media means to get the information to the Soldiers and family members.

f. **DAIG.** Provide a copy of this memorandum to the DODIG.


PAUL T. MIKOLASHEK
Lieutenant General, USA
The Inspector General

CSA Decision:

Approved: _____

Disapproved: _____

Other: _____

COL Stanley Meyer/703-601-1100

Appendix F. Department of the Navy Inspector General Report



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
NAVAL INSPECTOR GENERAL
1014 N STREET SE SUITE 100
WASHINGTON NAVY YARD DC 20374-5006

IN REPLY REFER TO:

1742
Ser N33/0107
3 FEB 2004


From: Naval Inspector General
To: Department of Defense Inspector General

Subj: REPORT OF ASSESSMENT OF NAVY VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Ref: (a) DoD Directive 1000.4 of 3 June 2002

Encl: (1) Report of Assessment

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosure (1) is submitted as the annual assessment of the Navy Voting Assistance Program.
2. My point of contact for voting issues is LCDR Vera Parker. She can be reached at 202-433-6642 or by email at vera.parker@navy.mil.


JILL VINDEL-LOFTUS
Deputy

Copy to:
FERG-6

**NAVAL INSPECTOR GENERAL'S REPORT OF ASSESSMENT OF THE NAVY'S
VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR CY03**

1. The Navy's Voting Assistance Program for calendar year 2003 was found lacking. To quote one Voting Assistance Officer (VAO): "Calendar year 2003 is a non-voting year" and that is how a significant portion of commands approached the program despite the fact that three governors were elected this year.

2. The Naval Inspector General surveyed 24 units, 5 major commands and 3 installations. Of the 32 commands visited:

- 8 of the VAOs were very recently assigned.
- 6 did not have the required seniority.
- 18 had not received any training
- 12 did not have the current Voter Assistance Guide or Federal Post Card Applications
- 4 of 12 deployable units did not have the Federal Write In Absentee Ballots.
- 17 had no method to track voting awareness training.
- 21 had no method to track the required in-hand delivery of Federal Post Card Applications.
- And 15 did not have their numbers listed in the command phone directory. (Note: All 3 installation operators had valid numbers for their VAO.)

3. Additional shortcomings in compliance with reference (a) include:

- Service Voting Action Officer (SVAO) is an O-3 vice O-4.
- Names/links database of unit VAOs has not been established on the Navy's Voting Homepage.
- A special telephone Voting Action Line is not listed on the Navy's Voting Homepage.
- Most CO's are unaware of the requirement to comment on the VAO's performance in their Fitness Report.

4. Despite the poor support of the program during calendar year 2003, 65% of 836 personnel surveyed knew where or who to contact in order to obtain the Federal Post Card Registration and Absentee Ballot Request Form. While less than desired, it indicates a fairly strong distribution of voting information by the Navy has been executed.

5. The Office of Naval Inspector General has issues with some of the program requirements. Specifically, the recommended pay-grade for the Service Voting Action Officer and unit VAO are too senior. The Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) suggested ratio of 25:1, in many cases, is impractical and should be raised. We also question the need for a central database of unit VAOs. This function is a collateral duty and maintaining the database is time-consuming and of questionable accuracy.

With the advent of your recently completed realignment and standup of the DoD IG Inspections Division, there should be future opportunities for our inspection teams to work in concert with your offices to minimize the impact on inspected commands, as well as the drain on our scarce resources. While we assume your Inspections Division will focus on DOD Agencies and Joint Commands, we believe that the Voting Programs Assessment is an example of an area where DoD IG can better assess overall DOD Voting Assistance Programs. We would still ensure coordination wherever possible.

6. Finally, the Navy most strongly recommends DoD pursue legislation that will make Secure Electronic Registration and Voting Experiment (SERVE) commonplace instead of an experiment. The difficulties with delivery of hardcopy mail to and from personnel overseas and on deployable units at sea can be easily overcome in today's electronic age.

Appendix G. Department of the Air Force Inspector General Report

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE VOTING REPORT

TO THE

DOD INSPECTOR GENERAL

(For the Period 1 Jan – 31 Dec 03)

1. The overall assessment of the Air Force's compliance with DoD Directive 1000.4, Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP), related Air Force Instructions, and the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act is satisfactory. The Air Force, at all levels, placed increased emphasis on the voting program and associated requirements. In accordance with DoD Directive 1000.4, the Air Force evaluated the effectiveness of the voting programs at the squadron, group, wing, and command levels through scheduled unit compliance inspections during CY2003.

a. The documents that define the Air Force's Voting Assistance Program policies are the Air Force Voting Plan; Air Force Instruction 36-3107, *Voting Assistance Program*; and AFI 90-201, *Inspector General Activities*. All documents have been revised to reflect requirements of DoD 1000.4. AFI 36-3107 was completely rewritten in September 2003, and AFI 90-201, *Inspector General Activities*, has been updated to include a robust inspection checklist.

b. Over 5400 Voting Assistance Officers at various levels attended FVAP workshops, Air Force training sessions, and the FVAP web-based training. The Air Force Voting website is located at <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/votefund/>. It contains a link to FVAP, the *Voting Information News*, and other voting websites, as well as the AF Voting Action Line telephone number.

Other efforts noted during this inspection period include:

- voting training at Basic Military Training (in the Military Citizenship lesson)
- briefings delivered and Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) distributed during commander's calls
- FPCAs inserted in mobility bags
- voting process addressed and FPCAs disseminated during activation briefings
- MAJCOM links to the Federal Voting Assistance Program webpage

c. The requirement to ensure that each eligible voter (active duty personnel, DoD civilians located overseas, and their dependents) received, in-hand, the FPCA is included in the Air Force Voting Plan. Some MAJCOMS used tracking systems to ensure 100% contact. E-mails to all Installation Voting Assistance Officers discussed the requirements for in-hand delivery, and voting training included the in-hand delivery requirement. Despite these efforts, not all MAJCOMS ensured, through a 100%

tracking system, that in-hand delivery requirements were met. Additionally, some MAJCOMs reported problems contacting deployed personnel.

d. The Air Force Voting Plan dictates the maximum number of voters that can be represented by a Voting Assistance Officer. The ratio at the unit level is one Unit Voting Counselor for every 100 voters.

e. Air Force commanders used several methods to express support for the voting program. For example, the Air Force requires units to ensure incoming personnel and their dependents are provided voting guidance, and as such, bases provided voting guidance/information during their Newcomer Orientation. Other efforts included:

- displaying voting posters in high-traffic areas
- publishing articles in base newspapers
- highlighting voting and distributing FPCAs during commander's calls
- sending Voting News Releases to Installation Voting Officers
- establishing voter registration drives in high-traffic areas, such as the BX, post office, and commissary
- monthly status reports of number of eligible voters and number contacted for first sergeant and commander tracking

f. The Air Force Senior Voting Representative is designated by HQ USAF/DP and is responsible for the Air Force Voting Assistance Program. The Senior Voting Representative appoints the Air Force Voting Action Officer and Assistant Voting Action Officer, and is responsible for oversight of the program. The Senior Service Voting Representative was responsible for an End-of-Year report, which reflected an increased voting awareness within the Air Force and reflected satisfactory adherence to directives.

g. Air Force Installation Voting Assistance Officers order voting materials at <http://www.o-publishing.af.mil/> by establishing an on-line account or placing their order through an Organizational Account Representative. The Air Force makes a one-time automatic shipment of new Voting Assistance Guides and posters to the Military Personnel Flight (MPF) Customer Service section (at a 1 to 40 ratio) upon FVAP publication. MPF personnel contact Installation Voting Assistance Officers upon receipt of materials and ensure distribution. As directed in the Air Force Voting Plan, the Installation Voting Assistance Officers are instructed to order four FPCAs and one FWAB for each military member assigned. Additional copies may be ordered through the Air Force Publications website above. The SF 76, FPCA and SF 186, Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot, are ordered on-line by the Installation Voting Assistance Officers. In one case, there was a backlog of forms on order, so the MAJCOM contracted the forms through a local printing plant.

2. USAF inspected 89 voting programs. Overwhelmingly, programs were in compliance with few problems noted. Inspected units are listed below by MAJCOM.

a. Headquarters Air Combat Command Inspector General (IIQ ACC) conducted two inspections:

UNIT/LOCATION

1 FW, Langley AFB, VA
28 BW, Ellsworth AFB, SD

b. Headquarters Air Education and Training Command (HQ AETC) conducted 25 inspections:

UNIT/LOCATION

381 TRG, Vandenberg AFB, CA
14 FTW, Columbus AFB, MS
42 ABW, Maxwell AFB, AL
12 FTW, Randolph AFB, TX
56 FW, Luke AFB, AZ
325 FW, Tyndall AFB, FL
71 FTW, Vance AFB, OK
178 FW, Springfield, OH
362 RCS, March AFB, CA
369 RCS, Los Angeles AFB, CA
368 RCS, Hill AFB, UT
372 RCG, Hill AFB, UT
344 RCS, Arlington, TX
341 RCS, San Antonio, TX
348 RCS, Little Rock, AR
349 RCS, Tinker AFB, OK
343 RCS, Offutt AFB, NE
345 RCS, Scott AFB, IL
342 RCS, Minneapolis, MN
347 RCS, Milwaukee, WI
369 RCG, Lackland AFB, TX
317 RCS, Andrews AFB, MD
314 RCS, Burlington, NJ
318 RCS, Harrisburg, PA
311 RCS, Pittsburgh, PA

c. Headquarters Air Force Materiel Command (HQ AFMC) conducted two inspections:

UNIT/LOCATION

ASC, WPAFB, OH
AAC, Eglin AFB, FL

d. Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command (HQ AFRC) inspected 42 voting assistance programs:

UNIT/LOCATION

482 FW, Homestead AFB, FL
340 FTG, Randolph AFB, TX
913 AW, Willow Grove NAS, PA
917 WG, Barksdale AFB, LA
440 AW, Gen. Mitchell IAP, WI
HQ 22 AF, Dobbins AFB, GA
622 RSG, Dobbins AFB, GA (including 14 GSUs)
53 APS, Pope AFB, NC
71 APS, Langley AFB, VA
622 CF, Langley AFB, VA
622 AES, MacDill AFB, FL
622 MSF, Robins AFB, GA
622 CLSS, Robins AFB, GA
339 FLTS, Robins AFB, GA
94 APS, Robins AFB, GA
55 CBCS, Robins AFB, GA
622 ASTS, Robins AFB, GA
84 APS, Greenville, SC
722 ASTS, Ft Hamilton, NY
85 APS, Hanscom AFB, MA
92 APS, Wyoming City, PA
920 RQW, Patrick AFB, FL (including 1 GSU)
305 RQS, Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ
433 AW, Lackland AFB, TX
446 AW, McChord AFB, WA
HQ 4 AF, March AFB, CA
604 RSG, March AFB, CA (including 1 GSU)
804 CES, Elmendorf AFB, AK
610 RSG, NAS Ft. Worth, TX (including 5 GSUs)
710 MDS, Offutt AFB, NE
610 IF, Offutt AFB, NE
710 IF, Brooks AFB, TX
555 RHS, Nellis AFB, NV
Det 1, FRAP Shaw AFB, SC
624 RSG, Hickam AFB, HI (including 3 GSUs)
44 APS, Andersen AFB, Guam
724 ASTS, Andersen AFB, Guam
724 MOF, Andersen AFB, Guam
413 FTG, Robins AFB, GA (including 2 GSUs)

339 FTS, Robins AFB, GA
313 FTF, Lackland AFB, TX
908 AW, Maxwell AFB, AL

c. Headquarters Air Force Special Operations Command (HQ AFSOC) conducted four inspections:

UNIT/LOCATION
280 CBCS, Dothan, AL
USAF SOS, Hurlburt Field, FL
352 SOG, RAF Mildenhall, UK
16 SOW, Hurlburt Field, FL

f. Headquarters Air Force Space Command (HQ AFSPC) conducted four inspections:

UNIT/LOCATION
SMC, Los Angeles AFB, CA
460 ABW, Buckley ANGB, CO
21 SW, Peterson AFB, CO
341 SW, Malmstrom AFB, MT

g. Headquarters Air Mobility Command (HQ AMC) conducted seven inspections:

UNIT/LOCATION
437 AW, Charleston AFB, SC
62 AW, McChord AFB, WA
319 ARW, Grand Forks AFB, ND
22 ARW, McConnell AFB, KS
305 AMW, McGuire AFB, NJ
375 AW, Scott AFB, IL
43 AW, Pope AFB, NC

h. Headquarters Pacific Air Forces (HQ PACAF) conducted one inspection:

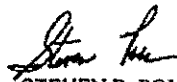
UNIT/LOCATION
36 ABW, Andersen AFB, Guam

i. Headquarters United States Air Forces in Europe (HQ USAFE) conducted two inspections:

UNIT/LOCATION
RAF Mildenhall, UK
RAF Lakenheath, UK

3. In response to the information gleaned from the MAJCOM reports, SAF/IG will publish a TIG Brief article summarizing the findings and present best practices noted, such as placing FPCAs in the mobility bags and developing a 100% contact list.

4. POC is Capt Jackie Nickols, (703) 588-1534, jacqueline.nickols@pentagon.af.mil.



STEVEN R. POLK
Lieutenant General, USAF
The Inspector General

Appendix H. Marine Corps Inspector General Report



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
2 NAVY ANNEX
WASHINGTON, DC 20380-1775

IN REPLY REFER TO:

1000
IGI
5 Feb 04

From: Director, Inspection Division, Inspector General of the Marine Corps
To: Department of Defense Inspector General for Auditing, Yorktown Audit
Office, 111 Cybernetics Way, Suite 110, Yorktown, VA 23693-5642
(Attn: Mr. Tonkovic)

Subj: ANNUAL ASSESSMENT OF USMC FEDERAL VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR 2003

Ref: (a) DODDIR 1000.4 dtd 3 Jun 2002

Encl: (1) List of Units Inspected w/Results

1. Per the reference and Public Law 107-107 (2002 National Defense Authorization Act), this correspondence reports the results of the IGMC "Annual Assessment of USMC Federal Voting Assistance Program for 2003."
2. The Marine Corps has an effective Voter Assistance Program and complied with the reference, with the exception of discrepancies as noted below. This assessment is based upon the results of 59 independent units and major command inspections conducted during Calendar Year 2003.
3. The Automated Inspections Reporting System (AIRS) guided the inspection process and resulted in the assessment listed above. Enclosed is the list of inspected units. The Inspection Division, IGMC, was the sole inspector for these units augmented with the Voting Assistance Program Manager for the inspection of major commands.
4. This year's inspection process included interviews for the unit's Voting Assistance Officer, the commanding officer, and Marines randomly selected within the unit. The inspection team reviewed documents and procedures to ensure compliance with all Marine Corps Orders and directives. They also inspected facilities to ensure Voting Assistance material was displayed IAW the MCO on Troop Information. The following grades were assigned: Mission Capable or Non-Mission Capable (only one unit was found non-mission capable) with findings, discrepancies and recommendations to improve the unit Voting Program. Of these possible grades, a "finding" is the most egregious. It is a significant problem within the command which:
 - a. Detracts from the command's readiness.
 - b. Involves or could lead to waste, fraud, or abuse.
 - c. Involves issues of health, morale, or welfare of the unit's Marines or Sailors.
 - d. Significantly deviates from higher headquarters policies and procedures.

Subj: ANNUAL ASSESSMENT OF USMC FEDERAL VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR 2003

5. Although no significant problems were noted upon inspection, the following discrepancies were identified at the individual unit level. Immediate action was taken to correct all discrepancies.

- a. Federal Post Card Applications were not given 'in hand' to every Service member. This discrepancy is identified USMC-wide.
- b. VAO appointment letter not in correct format or forwarded to HQMC.
- c. No documentation of training being conducted for the command, voting officers or assistants.
- d. Outdated Voting Assistance Guides.
- e. VAO not listed in command telephone directory.
- f. Voting Assistance Newsletters not maintained.
- g. Voting material not displayed.
- h. Lack of familiarity with the FVAP website.
- i. Many unit Voting Officers were assigned to more than 200 Marines in larger units.

6. The IGMC will continue to inspect, review, and update Orders, policies and procedures to ensure eligible personnel are effectively serviced by the Federal Voting Assistance Program.


R. C. DAHM, JR.
COL USMC

CY-83 IGMC INSPECTION RESULTS FOR THE VOTING PROGRAM (FA#210)

<u>Command</u>	<u>Results</u>	<u>Findings</u>	<u>Discrepancies</u>	<u>Recommendations</u>
MARFORPAC, HI	MC	0	0	0
MCCDC, Quantico	MC	0	1	0
MARLOGCOM, GA	MC	0	0	3
MCB HI	MC	1	0	2
MCB Japan	MC	0	1	1
3RD FSSG, Japan	MC	0	1	0
3RD MARDIV, Japan	MC	0	1	1
1ST MAW, Japan	MC	0	0	2
III MEF, Japan	MC	0	1	1
MCB Pendleton	MC	0	2	2
MCABE, NC	MC	0	1	1
MCAS Cherry Point	MC	0	2	3
MCAS New River	MC	0	2	4
MCABWA, Miramar	MC	0	1	2
MCAS Yuma, AZ	MC	0	0	2
MCB Camp Lejeune	MC	0	2	4
TECOM, Quantico	NMC	1	5	0
MCCDC, Quantico	MC	0	0	2
MCLB Albany, GA	MC	0	3	7
HQBM, MCB HI	MC	0	0	3
MCAF, MCB HI	MC	0	5	3
MCAS Futenma	MC	0	1	1
HQSVCSN, MCB	MC	0	0	0
MRB, 3rd FSSG	MC	0	2	2
CSSG-3, 3rd FSSG	MC	0	5	4
8th ESS, 3rd FSSG	MC	0	1	3
3rd RECON	MC	0	1	1
HQBN, 3rd MARDIV	MC	1	0	4
VMGR-152, 1st MAW	MC	0	0	1
MWCS-18, 1st MAW	MC	0	2	1
HMM-362, 1st MAW	MC	1	0	9
HALS-24, 1st MAW	MC	0	0	2
8th MI, HQBN, HQMC	MC	0	0	5
H&HS, New River, NC	MC	0	1	5
VMR-1, Cherry Point	MC	0	5	4
H&HS, Cherry Point	MC	0	1	7
H&HS, Yuma	MC	0	1	4
H&HS, Miramar, CA	MC	0	0	1
MCAS, Pendleton CA	MC	0	2	3
HQSPTBH, Lejeune	MC	0	4	5

Enclosure (1)

SOI, Lejuene NC	MC	0	4	2	
WTBN, Lejuene, NC	MC	0	4	7	
TECOM, Quantico	MC	0	6	2	
MCD DLI, Monterey	MC	1	0	0	
MCD Fort Huachuca	MC	0	6	0	
MAWTS-1, Yuma AZ	MC	0	2	0	
MCD Fort Bliss, TX	MC	0	0	0	
MCD Fort Lee VA	MC	0	0	0	
MCD Fort Sill, OK	MC	0	1	0	
MARFOREUR	MC	0	0	0	
NMITC, VA	MC	0	0	0	Outstanding
MCSA, Kansas City	MC	0	3	0	
EWTLANT, VA	MC	0	1	3	
Blount Island, FL	MC	0	1	5	
MATSG Pensacola	MC	0	3	8	
MCRD, PISC	MC	0	4	5	
MATSG Corpus, TX	MC	0	11	0	
MCD Keesler AFB	MC	0	0	2	Outstanding

Enclosure (1)

Appendix I. Report Distribution

Office of the Secretary of Defense

Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer
Deputy Chief Financial Officer
Deputy Comptroller (Program/Budget)
Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness
Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness
Director, Federal Voting Assistance Program
Assistant Secretary of Defense (Legislative Affairs)
Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs)

Department of the Army

Commander, U.S. Army, Europe, and Seventh Army
Inspector General, Department of the Army
Superintendent, U.S. Military Academy
Auditor General, Department of the Army
The Adjutant General, Department of the Army

Department of the Navy

Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs)
Naval Inspector General
Deputy Naval Inspector General for Marine Corps Matters
Superintendent, U.S. Naval Academy
Marine Corps Deputy Commandant for Manpower and Reserve Affairs
Commander, Navy Personnel Command
Auditor General, Department of the Navy

Department of the Air Force

Assistant Secretary of the Air Force (Financial Management and Comptroller)
Inspector General of the Air Force
Superintendent, U.S. Air Force Academy
Auditor General, Department of the Air Force
Director of Personnel Resources

Combatant Commands

Commander, U.S. European Command
Commander, U.S. Central Command
Inspector General, U.S. Joint Forces Command

Non-Defense Federal Organization

Office of Management and Budget

Congressional Committees and Subcommittees, Chairman and Ranking Minority Member

Senate Committee on Appropriations
Senate Subcommittee on Defense, Committee on Appropriations
Senate Committee on Armed Services
Senate Subcommittee on Military Personnel, Committee on Armed Services
Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs
House Committee on Appropriations
House Subcommittee on Defense, Committee on Appropriations
House Committee on Armed Services
House Subcommittee on Military Personnel, Committee on Armed Services
House Committee on Government Reform
House Subcommittee on Government Efficiency and Financial Management, Committee on Government Reform
House Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats, and International Relations, Committee on Government Reform
House Subcommittee on Technology, Information Policy, Intergovernmental Relations, and the Census, Committee on Government Reform


Department of the Army Comments



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY HUMAN RESOURCES COMMAND
200 STOVALL STREET
ALEXANDRIA VA 22332-0400

AHRC-PDZ-A

12 March 2004

MEMORANDUM THRU DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF, G-1 
FOR INSPECTOR GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: Report on DoD Implementation of the Voting Assistance Program
(Project No. D2003LF-0188)

1. The purpose of this memorandum is to provide comments to the recommendations contained in the subject report.
2. The Army has been responsive in efforts to improve the Voting Assistance Program by:
 - a. Publishing implementing instructions for the 2004 Elections satisfying the requirements made in the previous DoDIG report. Additionally, Army Regulation 608-20 is under revision to comply with current DoD Directive 1000.4 with an expected publication date of the 2nd quarter, FY 2005.
 - b. Developing reporting systems to monitor yearly program compliance during federal election years and plans to implement additional reporting requirements during non-federal election years.
 - c. Proceeding with evaluation to develop an implementation plan to ensure junior enlisted personnel and other first-time voters are provided voter assistance information during general military training sessions or command orientations.
 - d. Employing one civilian employee with an additional primary duty as the Service Voting Action Officer.
 - e. Preparing to provide correspondence from the Chief of Staff, Army, to all levels of command emphasizing the importance of the voting assistance program.
 - f. The Army Inspector General providing voting assistance program inspection results to the Voting Action Officer annually.
3. Additionally, over the past year, the Army has provided a web page and sent memorandums from The Adjutant General to Major Army Commanders requesting

Printed on  Recycled Paper

AHRC-PDZ-A
SUBJECT: Report on DoD Implementation of the Voting Assistance Program
(Project No. D2003LF-0188)

command support for the program. Our public affairs campaign included an interview with the Army News Service, and a video spot taped by The Adjutant General on March 12, 2004. A story on the Voting Assistance Program is planned for the July 2004 issue of Soldier's Magazine.

4. The Army's Voting Assistance Program point of contact is Mr. James Davis at (703) 325-4530/DSN 221-4530; fax number is (703) 325-4532/DSN 221-4532. E-Mail address is davisj@hoffman.army.mil.


GINA S. FARRISEE
Brigadier General, USA
The Adjutant General

DODIG DRAFT REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS-VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

1. We recommend the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness:

- a. Expedite the revision and issuance of DoD Directive 1000.4, "Federal Voting Assistance Program", June 3, 2002, and the DoD Voting Plan for 2004-2005.
- b. Provide oversight to ensure that Service voting assistance program regulations and Service voting plans are consistent with the requirements established by the new guidance.

2. We recommend that the Secretaries of the Army and the Navy update voting assistance program regulations to be consistent with the May 2, 2003, guidance from the Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness.

3. We recommend that the Secretaries of the Military Departments and the Commandant of the Marine Corps update voting assistance program regulations, instructions, and orders as soon as the new DoD Directive 1000.4 is issued.

4. We recommend that the Secretaries of the Military Departments and the Commandant of the Marine Corps require that the Senior Service Voting Representatives:

- a. Develop a reporting system to monitor throughout the year a programs' compliance with the requirements of DoD Directive 1000.4 and Service voting guidance.
- b. Ensure junior enlisted personnel and other first-time voters are provided voter assistance information during general military training sessions or command orientations.

5. We recommend that the Secretaries of the Army and Air Force establish the Service Voting Action Officer as a full-time position.

6. We recommend that the Secretaries of the Navy and Air Force and the Commandant of the Marine Corps consider establishing the Service Voting Action officer as a civilian position.

7. We recommend that the Secretaries of the Military Departments require senior military personnel, such as the Army and Air Force Chiefs of Staff, the Chief of Naval Operations, and the Commandant of the Marine Corps, issue memorandums to all levels of command, reemphasizing the importance of the voting assistance program, continued command emphasis, and implementation of the program.

8. We recommend that the Service Inspectors General provide voting assistance program inspection results to their Service Voting Action Officer on a continuing basis.

U.S. Army, Europe, and Seventh Army Comments



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY, EUROPE, AND SEVENTH ARMY
UNIT 29351
APO AE 09014

AEAGX-IA (36-2c)

15 March 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR INSPECTOR GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, 400
ARMY NAVY DRIVE, ARLINGTON, VA 22202-4704

SUBJECT: Comments to Draft Report, DOD Implementation of the Voting Assistance Program


1. Reference memorandum, IG, DOD, 3 Mar 04, subject: Report on DoD Implementation of the Voting Assistance Program (Project No. D2003LF-0188).
2. Headquarters, U.S. Army Europe and Seventh Army (USAREUR) appreciates the opportunity to review the draft report and provide comments for your consideration for inclusion in the final report.
3. Since the DODIG audit, the Commanding General (CG), USAREUR issued a memorandum that outlines his intent for the USAREUR 2004 Voting Campaign (encl 1). Further, in accordance with campaign guidance, the USAREUR DCS, G1 was designated as the USAREUR Senior Voting Assistance Officer (SVAO) to take the lead for implementing this campaign in the European theater and to ensure proper command emphasis. In addition, the CG USAREUR directed that the MACOM IG assess the USAREUR voting program during their inspections. The CG, USAREUR also emphasized the importance of the Voting Assistance Program by issuance of "Bell Sends # 11-04" message, USAREUR 2004 Voting Assistance Program (encl 2).
4. The USAREUR 2004 Voting Campaign includes the USAREUR Voting Action Plan which provides guidance on conducting a thorough and effective voting program in the Army in Europe, and complies with the Federal Voting Assistance Program. The Plan provides guidance that addresses all weaknesses noted in the draft report. The following are examples that highlight actions USAREUR is taking:
 - Training. Training workshops are scheduled for March and May 2004 for Installation and Unit Voting Assistance Officers. For those that missed the training workshops, training is available on the Federal Voters Assistance Program website.
 - Federal Postcard Applications (FPCAs). The USAREUR Voting Campaign Plan emphasize DOD requirement for in-hand delivery of the FPCA and 1st Personnel Command (PERSCOM) will monitor to ensure compliance.
 - Awareness. 1st PERSCOM will conduct Overseas Citizens Voters Week (27 June through 3 July 2004) and Armed Forces Voters Week (3 through 11 September 2004).

AEAGX-1A (36-2e)

SUBJECT: Comments to Draft Report, DOD Implementation of the Voting Assistance Program

5. The USAREUR point of contact is Mr. Tilden Jio at DSN 370-7906 or by e-mail:
jio@hq.hqusareur.army.mil.

2 Encls


WILLIAM L. WHANGER, II
Chief, Internal Review and
Audit Compliance Office



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY, EUROPE, AND SEVENTH ARMY
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDING GENERAL
UNIT 29351
APO AE 09014-9351

S: 27 February 2004
22 January 2004

AEAGA

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: USAREUR 2004 Voting Campaign

This memorandum expires 1 December 2004.

1. References: Enclosure 1, paragraph 2, lists references.
2. The Federal voting season will begin soon. During this time, the President, 34 U.S. Senators, 435 members of the House of Representatives, 13 State Governors, and thousands of State and local officials will be elected. As leaders, we must ensure that our Soldiers and civilians understand the importance of voting as well as the procedures they need to follow if they want to participate in the general election, including the primaries, during the 2004 election year.
3. This memorandum outlines my intent for the USAREUR 2004 Voting Campaign, which will run from 1 January through 31 December 2004. This campaign ensures compliance with the Army Voting Plan and implements the Army Voting Assistance Program in the Army in Europe. The purpose of the Army Voting Assistance Program is to help Soldiers and other eligible individuals register to vote and cast their ballots according to applicable statutes and regulations. The guidance provided by the references in enclosure 1 and the prohibitions in enclosure 2 must be strictly observed to ensure compliance. Servicing staff judge advocate offices can provide assistance in helping commanders apply this guidance while implementing voting assistance programs in their commands.
4. The goal of the USAREUR 2004 Voting Campaign is to ensure that all military personnel, DOD civilians, and their family members are provided information on registering to vote and are given the opportunity to exercise their right to vote. The USAREUR G1 is hereby designated as the USAREUR Senior Voting Assistance Officer and has the lead for implementing this campaign in the European theater. The campaign has four phases as follows:
 - a. **Phase I: Preparation and Initiation (January-April 2004).** During this phase, the USAREUR Voting Assistance Program Action Plan will be distributed to USAREUR major subordinate and tenant commands (AE Reg 10-5, app A) and the United States Army Installation Management Agency, Europe Region Office (IMA-Europe). Commanders of USAREUR major subordinate and tenant commands will develop unit voting action plans that encourage using the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) website (<http://www.fvap.gov>) to obtain all voting information and materials. (Limited printed quantities of voting information and the Voting Assistance Guide may be available.) Also during this phase, 1st Personnel Command (1st PERSCOM) will ensure the procurement and distribution (in-hand delivery) of Federal postcard

This memorandum is available at <https://www.aceam.hq.usareur.army.mil/library>.

AEAGA

SUBJECT: USAREUR 2004 Voting Campaign

applications (FPCAs) and Federal write-in absentee ballots (FWABs). These items will be shipped to area support group (ASG) voting assistance officers. (Publications clerks also can order these items through normal publications channels at https://acpubs.army.mil/ac/publicacpubs_main.asp.) Installation voting assistance officers will generate and maintain a directory that includes the names and office telephone numbers of all local unit voting assistance officers (including for tenant organizations). Installation telephone operators will be provided the name, mailing address, e-mail address, and office telephone numbers of installation voting assistance officers. Inspectors general will inspect unit voting assistance programs according to AR 20-1. Commanders and voting assistance officers will conduct command information programs before primary elections begin and repeat these programs, as necessary, to provide information to Soldiers, civilians, and family members on the primary and general elections and encourage them to take part.

b. Phase II: Registration and Primary Elections (April-September 2004). This phase involves the careful planning and execution of voting assistance programs to inform potential voters of primary election schedules. Voting assistance officers will attend a voting assistance workshop and will concentrate on providing absentee registration and voting assistance to all personnel and eligible family members for Federal, State, and run-off primary elections. 1st PERSCOM will continue to obtain and distribute FPCAs and FWABs. FWABs may be used only for the general election (Federal offices) under conditions specified in the Voting Assistance Guide. Some jurisdictions may allow the use of the FWAB for State and local elections by all absentee voters as specified in the Voting Assistance Guide. 1st PERSCOM will also conduct Overseas Citizens Voters Week (27 Jun through 3 Jul 04) and Armed Forces Voters Week (3 through 11 Sep 04). We must develop programs to support the objective of raising awareness and increasing motivation to participate in the general election, including publicizing the importance of early action on the part of the voter in order to obtain a ballot for the general election well in advance of election deadlines. As with each phase, 1st PERSCOM will continue agency and command information programs and the distribution of voter information.

c. Phase III: Requesting Ballots for the General Election (October-November 2004). During this phase, voting information will continue to be distributed. The main emphasis will be on communicating how and when to use the FWAB. Voting assistance officers will recommend the use of the FWAB if the voter meets the criteria and does not receive a regular absentee ballot in time for the ballot to be returned and counted.

d. Phase IV: Evaluation (December 2004). During this phase, 1st PERSCOM will, if requested, assist with and participate in post-election surveys of military members, overseas civilian employees, and unit voting assistance officers. The survey findings will be used to plan for future voting assistance programs and will be part of the Seventeenth Report on the Federal Voting Assistance Program.

AEAGA

SUBJECT: USAREUR 2004 Voting Campaign

5. By 27 February 2004, commanders of USAREUR major subordinate and tenant commands will develop unit voting action plans that incorporate the requirements in this memorandum and expand on the USAREUR Voting Action Plan in enclosure 1. Commanders will send completed plans to the USAREUR Voting Assistance Officer and the Commander, 1st Personnel Command, by 27 February 2004. The goal of these plans is for units to have knowledgeable, dedicated voting assistance officers who ensure that Soldiers and their families know how to register to vote and how to cast overseas absentee ballots if they choose to do so. The effectiveness of the voting campaign depends on command diligence in this complicated task as well as a successful command information plan and effective coordination at all levels.

a. Beginning in mid-November 2003 and running throughout the voting campaign, the Office of the Chief, Public Affairs (OCPA), HQ USAREUR/7A, in coordination with IMA-Europe, will publish and distribute articles on the right to vote and materials that are coordinated with American Forces Network (AFN) and print media. These articles and materials will be distributed down to the Soldier and family-member level. Commanders and other leaders will leverage these resources in their units' ongoing campaigns. The following resources also may be used to complement voting campaign programs: family readiness groups, predeployment preparation, local media, e-mail, USAREUR webpages, Bell Sends messages, and news releases on voting. More resources are available on the USAREUR Homepage.

b. The coordination and cooperation among ASGs, base support battalions (BSBs), and their tenant USAREUR units is critical to complying with DOD Directive 1000.4 and fully implementing the USAREUR functions of the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) in the Army in Europe. Information and guidance that is sent to ASGs and BSBs through the IMA-Europe Voting Assistance Officer (who coordinates tasks related to the program) must be made available to potential voters in a timely manner to ensure that IMA-Europe, ASGs, BSBs, and subordinate units and activities in their areas of responsibility are administering the program according to Federal implementing instructions. Commanders must develop a rapport with their supporting ASGs and BSBs to facilitate assistance and overall success of the voting campaign. We must ensure that everyone involved is aware of required information, materials, and procedures on how to obtain required documents, and that we distribute the same to every eligible voter. We must stress the importance of Overseas Citizens Voters Week, Army Voter Registration Month, and Armed Forces Voters Week through advertising, promoting, and setting goals to get 100 percent in-hand delivery of FPCAs and FWABs to eligible voters.

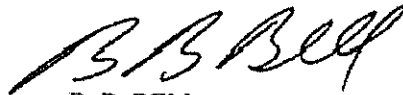
c. Specific responsibilities and tasks to subordinate units, HQ USAREUR/7A staff offices, and other agencies are included in the USAREUR Voting Action Plan in enclosure 1.

AEAGA

SUBJECT: USAREUR 2004 Voting Campaign

6. The enclosures to this memorandum provide information critical to these tasks. The USAREUR Homepage also provides information that will further help all concerned to concentrate on the tasks and steps we must take to ensure our Soldiers, civilians, and family members are provided every opportunity to cast a ballot. Throughout the voting season, separate messages will be issued to address specific concerns.

7. The success of this campaign is everyone's responsibility. We must make every effort to educate all eligible voters on where and how to cast a ballot in the upcoming elections. Our effectiveness and success depend on four key elements: adequate training, publicity, planning and preparation, and concerned leaders taking complete ownership of their voting assistance programs. Combining these elements, we must ensure that U.S. citizens throughout the Army in Europe are given the opportunity to vote.



B. B. BELL
General, USA
Commanding

3 Encls

1. USAREUR Voting Action Plan
2. Prohibited Practices
3. Voting Brochure

DISTRIBUTION:
B (AEPUBS)

Enclosures
omitted

B
E
L
L

S
E
N
D
S

#

11-04



22 January 2004



**USAREUR 2004
Voting Assistance Program**

1. The Federal voting season will begin soon. During this general election year, the President, 34 U.S. Senators, 435 members of the House of Representatives, 13 State Governors, and thousands of State and local officials will be elected. This year's campaign motto is "It's Your Future, VOTE For It!"

2. The USAREUR 2004 Voting Assistance Program is being implemented in the Army in Europe to help Soldiers and civilians participate in the elections. With so much of our force either committed to OIF or on the move deploying/redeploying, we will have to work especially hard to ensure every member of the team has an opportunity to vote. To help ensure the success of this program, commanders and other leaders must emphasize the importance of voting and facilitate the voting process in their organizations. Everyone in the chain of command, including rear detachment commanders, must be committed to giving each Soldier, civilian, and family member an informed opportunity to cast a ballot. All personnel must understand the importance of voting as well as the procedures they need to follow in order to participate in the general election, including the primaries.

3. The USAREUR 2004 Voting Campaign memorandum (available on the USAREUR Homepage) provides more information on the USAREUR 2004 Voting Assistance Program and lists areas of concern that require our close attention during the voting season. Leaders and voting assistance officers must comply with this memorandum and are encouraged to visit the Federal Voting Assistance Program website at <http://www.fvap.gov> to keep informed about the voting process and upcoming elections.

4. The opinions of our Soldiers and civilians are important. We can help ensure their opinions are heard by supporting the USAREUR 2004 Voting Assistance Program and encouraging everyone to exercise the right to vote.


B. B. BELL
General, USA
Commanding

ANY MISSION, ANYWHERE!

Department of the Air Force Comments



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON DC

15 MAR 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR DEPUTY INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR AUDITING
OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

FROM: HQ USAF/DPL
1040 Air Force Pentagon
Washington DC 20330-1040

SUBJECT: Report on DoD Implementation of the Voting Assistance Program (Project No. D2003LF-0188)

The following is in reply to your memorandum requesting the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force (Financial Management and Comptroller) provide Air Force comments on subject report.

Recommendation 3. "We recommend that the Secretaries of the Military Departments and the Commandant of the Marine Corps update voting assistance program regulation, instructions, and orders as soon as the new DoD Directive 1000.4 is issued."

Concur. The current Air Force Voting Instruction (AFI) was released 10 Sep 03. Upon publication of the revised DoD Directive 1000.4, AFI 36-3107, Voting Assistance Program, will be updated as necessary.

Recommendation 4. "We recommend that the Secretaries of the Military Departments and the Commandant of the Marine Corps require that Senior Service Voting Representatives:

a. Develop a reporting system to monitor throughout the year a programs' compliance with the requirements of DoD Directive 1000.4 and Service voting guidance.

Concur. The Air Force Service Voting Action Officer (SVAO) will monitor the health of the Air Force Voting Program, utilizing some of the recommendations given within this report.

b. Ensure junior enlisted personnel and other first-time voters are provided voter assistance information during general military training sessions or command orientations.

Concur. AFI 36-3107 requires the Installation Voting Assistance Officer to provide registration materials and a briefing on the absentee voting process at all Individualized, Newcomer, Treatment, and Orientation (INTRO) programs (newcomer's orientation). The SVAO will work with the Office of Primary Responsibility for the First Term Airman Center (FTAC) program to establish a requirement for the AF Voting Program as a mandatory briefing. The FTAC is a program designed to transition first duty station airmen from a training to a

mission-oriented environment. This is the perfect training environment to educate the young and first time voters. In addition the AF SVAO will coordinate with the OPR for various military training programs to ensure the AF Voting Program is included in the appropriate curriculum (i.e., Basic Training, Officer Training School, Professional Military Education, etc.).

Recommendation 5 and 6. "We recommend that the Secretaries of the Army and the Air Force establish the Service Voting Action Officer as a full-time position. We recommend that the Secretary of the Navy and Air Force and the Commandant of the Marine Corps consider establish the Service Voting Action Officer as a civilian position."

Non-concur. The Air Force Voting Program is currently run by two military personnel. While we concur a full-time position held by a civilian employee could effectively carry out the Air Force Voting Program, given the nature of the election calendar and gaps in voting intensity, a civilian employee with additional duties would be more feasible. We will work this issue to that end.

Recommendation 7. "We recommend that the Secretaries of the Military Departments require senior military personnel, such as the ... Air Force Chiefs of Staff...issue memorandums to all levels of command, reemphasizing the importance of the voting assistance program, continued command emphasis, and implementation of the program."

Concur.

Recommendation 8. "We recommend that the Service Inspectors General provided the voting assistance program inspection results to their Service Voting Action Officer on a continuing basis."

Concur.

If we can be of further assistance my point of contact is Lt Col Lee Shick and MSgt Julie Schlip, HQ AFPC/DPSF, DSN 665-3514/2338.



PETER U. SUTTON, Maj Gen, USAF
Director, Learning and Force Development
Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel

Marine Corps Comments



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
DEPUTY NAVAL INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR MARINE CORPS MATTERS
INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE MARINE CORPS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20380-1775

1000
IGMC
17Mar04

From: Inspector General of the Marine Corps
To: Inspector General, Department of Defense

Subj: REPORT ON DOD COMPLIANCE WITH THE UNIFORMED AND
OVERSEAS CITIZENS VOTING ACT

1. We have reviewed the subject report and offer the following comments:

a. We concur with the findings and recommendations listed in paragraphs 3, 6 and 8.

b. We do not concur with the recommendations contained in paragraph 7. This nonconcurrency is based upon review of the historical data contained in the report. The Commandant of the Marine Corps has issued guidance to all levels of command reemphasizing the importance of the voting assistance program and continuing command emphasis and implementation of existing programs. Specifically, two All Marine messages (ALMARS) were released by the Commandant concerning the implementation of our voting program. A third ALMAR will be released in June 2004. Additionally, two Marine Corps Administrative messages (MARADMINs) concerning our Marine Corps voting program were released this year with a third to be released this summer.

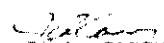
c. Recommendations 1, 2 and 5 do not apply to the Marine Corps.

d. We concur with recommendation 4 and will address the issue as follows. We are in the process of changing the Marine Corps Order that will require publishing the results of the Commanding General Inspections and Installation Voting Assistance Officers follow-up/assist visits. These results will be forwarded to the Service Voting Action Officer. Additionally, commands at all levels are providing voter awareness training utilizing materials readily available on the Marine Corps voting home page.

2. As stated in our last submission to the report, we continue to contend that proper training and education of personnel is the key to an effective voter registration program. As we inspect, we continue to find many excellent programs, but we are still identifying too many programs that are struggling. In the latter case, we assist the units in cultivating their programs to put them on the level mandated by Marine Corps and DoD instructions. We will continue our vigilance and assessments to strengthen our commitment to give every Marine the opportunity to vote.

Subj: REPORT ON DOD COMPLIANCE WITH THE UNIFORMED AND
OVERSEAS CITIZENS VOTING ACT

3. POC at this Headquarters is Colonel Ray Dunn at Comen
(703)614-2172 or DSN 224-2172.


J. A. CAREY
Acting